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## **The Right and Wrong of Private Judgment** *(Continued)*

"Ueber die Lehre zu erkennen and zu richten, kommt allen und jeden Christen zu, und zwar so, dass der verflucht ist, der solches Recht um ein Haerlein kraenkt" (Luther XIX:341). The matter of exercising private judgment is of supreme importance. (1) They commit a monstrous crime who keep God's people from dealing directly with God's Word and judging all doctrine on the basis of it. (2) Blessed is the community where the right of private judgment is recognized and practiced.

(1) The Pope and those Protestant theologians who aid and abet him in this matter are guilty of enormous crimes. In the first place, they are keeping men from performing their Christian duty. "For Christ gave to the people not only the right, but also the command to judge" (Luther, *loc. cit.*). "Try the spirits!" "Beware of false prophets!" Etc., etc. The Christian who asks or permits others to judge doctrinal matters for him is breaking a plain, explicit commandment of God. And he is thereby calling down God's wrath upon his head. "The hearers are obliged to judge all preaching under penalty of forfeiting the favor of Divine Majesty" (Luther X:1543. Holman Ed. IV, 78), "bei goettlicher Majestaet Ugnade — incurring God's disfavor and wrath."

Is it indeed such a grievous sin? For one thing, God will not permit men to set up other gods before Him. The Pope is robbing God of His prerogative. (Luther: "gottesraeuberish," XIX:343.) Demanding the right to rule over the faith and conscience of God's people, he is setting himself beside God. And those who at his bidding renounce the right of private judgment are acknowledging his blasphemous claims. Men who say with Erasmus: "I bring my reason into captivity to the obedience of the Church"

are doing a wicked thing. And they who instigate this wickedness incur a double measure of God's wrath.

A second crime: the Pope exacts from his people the *sacrificium intellectus et conscientiae*, and that spells the ruin, the decline, and eventual loss of all spiritual powers. "These passages," says Luther, "assign the right and power to judge any teaching to the hearers with urgent commands and *on pain of losing their souls*" (*loc. cit.*). Faith is spiritual knowledge and intelligent conviction. It knows what it believes and is convinced of the truth of it on the authority of Scripture. But the Pope will not have faith perform its natural functions. The Christian who obeys the Pope must keep his spiritual intelligence from functioning—he must sacrifice it. His intelligence protests against the papistical interpretation of Rom. 3:28 and insists that Scripture denounces the teaching that justification is by works. But he is told: You must bring your intelligence into captivity to the obedience of the Pope and accept the interpretation of the Church. And what happens when faith is not permitted to exercise its functions? When an organ of the body is persistently disused, it atrophies. Keep faith from expressing itself, and your spiritual powers will waste away. The Pope is ruining the spiritual life of his people. He that refuses to exercise private judgment is losing his soul.

The Pope demands of his subjects the *sacrificium conscientiae*. In the domain of morals they must accept the regulations of the Church as binding even though their conscience protests against some of them as not commanded by God and against some of them as immoral. The ability of the Jesuit to suppress the protesting voice of his conscience when he is commanded to go against a commandment of God is considered the acme of virtue in popedom. And in the sphere of doctrine the same sacrifice is demanded. To the Christian it is a matter of conscience what he believes. He accepts a certain teaching because his heart and conscience tells him that Scripture teaches it. He rejects a certain teaching because his heart and conscience tells him that Scripture denounces it. Luther: "Christ teaches us that everyone must be concerned about his own welfare and salvation and that, therefore, everyone must know and be certain what to believe and whom to follow. . . . Another may teach and preach what he will; that is his affair. You must be concerned about what you yourself believe, for your greatest loss or for your greatest gain" (X:1587). It is a matter of conscience to the Christian to know that what he believes is God's truth. Luther: "They will at once start to argue: How can one know what is God's Word and what is true or false? The Pope and the council must tell you that. I say: You cannot put your confidence in that; that will not satisfy your

conscience. You must decide for yourself; your neck is in danger; your life is at stake. Therefore God must assure your heart and tell you: This is God's Word. In no other way can you gain assurance" (XI:1396). Again: "It is at the peril of everyone's own conscience how he believes or disbelieves" (X:398).—Nay, says the Pope, you must not let your conscience bother you about doctrinal questions; those are Lutheran scruples. You may safely put your conscience into my keeping.

Luther cries out: "In the conscience God wants to be alone; there His Word alone shall rule" (XIX:832, 1). Again: "Der Seele soll und kann niemand gebieten, er wisse denn, ihr den Weg zu weisen gen Himmel. Das kann aber kein Mensch tun, sondern Gott allein" (X:396). "God alone is Lord of the conscience" (Westminster Confession, Chapter XX). No, declares Antichrist, I am the lord of the conscience of man; you need not bother your heads about questions of right and wrong, true or false doctrine; I decide that for you; I am your conscience — *Sacrificium Conscientiae!*

The Pope and his Protestant abettors are committing a fearful crime against their people. Training them to forego the right of private judgment, they are causing them to commit spiritual suicide. A man who has lost the sense of personal responsibility for his belief has lost his soul. As long as there is spiritual life in a man, his conscience demands a hearing when matters of faith and morals are being decided. And the man who suppresses the voice of his own conscience is keeping his spiritual life from functioning.—It is a frightful condition. It is the conscience that distinguishes man from the brute. And where men are kept from forming conscientious convictions, they are being dehumanized. When we hear a man who is under the complete domination of the Roman pope or the Protestant popes utter his belief, we do not hear the voice of conviction. It is the voice of a parrot. It is a robot speaking. A good Catholic is one who cannot call his soul his own. Was Luther wrong in denouncing the Pope and his abettors not only as "thieves and robbers," but also as "wolves and murderers"?<sup>17)</sup>

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17) A few additional statements. W.H. Prescott, *Ferdinand and Isabella*, in the chapter on the Inquisition: "In the present state of knowledge we look with disgust at the pretensions of any human being, however exalted, to invade the sacred rights of conscience, inalienably possessed by every man. We feel that the spiritual concerns of an individual may be safely left to himself, as most interested in them except so far as they can be affected by argument or friendly monition; that the idea of compelling belief in particular doctrines is a solecism, as absurd as wicked.... But, although these truths are now so obvious as rather to deserve the name of truisms, the world has been slow, very slow, in arriving at them, after many centuries of unspeakable oppression

A good Catholic cannot call his soul his own. That is to say, he is the slave of the priest, of the Pope. Walther: "Rob the congregation of the right to judge doctrine, and you give them over into slavery" (See *Walther and the Church*, p. 45). Again: "Der Laie ist nach paepstlicher Lehre mit seiner Seligkeit an den Pfaffen gebunden." The Catholic is compelled to put the decision of those questions which concern his eternal salvation into the hands of the priest, the Pope. And that is slavery of the worst kind. The slave who has lost his bodily freedom is to be pitied; but if he retains the freedom of his mind and of his soul, he is in far better state than the subjects of Antichrist. These slaves have their minds and souls shackled.—The Catholics resent such

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and misery. . . . The policy of the Roman Church at that time was not only shown in its perversion of some of the most obvious principles of morality, but in the discouragement of all free inquiry in its disciples, whom it instructed to rely implicitly in matters of conscience on their spiritual advisers. The artful institution of the tribunal of confession, established with this view, brought, as it were, the whole Christian world at the feet of the clergy. . . ." *The Pastor's Monthly*, 1931, p. 12: "There is a mighty reason for giving us the great privilege of coming directly to God through His inspired Word. As priests, God holds each one of us responsible for his own soul. We are to exercise our priesthood over our own souls. We are to do for ourselves everything that the Old Testament priests did for the chosen people of God. And God holds us responsible not only for our own souls, but also for the souls of others. . . . To discharge that responsibility, we must have the right of private judgment. Otherwise it would be like holding a dead machine responsible for the safety and welfare of the lives of men. . . ." F. Pieper: "The vaunted unity of the Catholic Church is built on the dehumanization of humanity. What distinguishes man from the irrational brute is the human conscience, the individual human conscience, responsible to God. The Catholic Church, however, demands of all of her members, unlearned or learned, the *sacrificium intellectus et conscientiae*. The order of the Jesuits has a special training course for it, elaborate 'exercises' for drilling it. But this renunciation of ones own conscience and unquestioning submission to the judgment of the Pope is not peculiar to the Jesuits; every faithful subject of the papal dominion, the cardinal no less than the meanest priest, is required to do it and does it. This is the situation in the papacy: The faithful Catholic, active though his reason and will be in other respects, is tied to the mind and will of the Pope, a veritable automaton" (see *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, 1930, p. 693). "Denying to the rest of mankind the right to judge matters of faith and morals and demanding of the rest of mankind the *sacrificium intellectus et voluntatis*, the Pope requires every human individual to renounce his own conscience, that is, to discard that thing which distinguishes man from the beast. It has been justly said of the papacy that it makes for the 'dehumanization of humanity.' The Reformation has restored to man the right to be a man. Luther demands in all questions of right and wrong the *appeal to the conscience of the individual*" (*Christliche Dogmatik* III, p. 81). Gerhard: "The Pope's men want their hearers to be real sheep, witless creatures, which follow the shepherd unthinkingly, even though he takes them into fields full of poisonous plants, even though he is a wolf; they want their hearers to be parrots, obeying the nod of the prelates; the prelates to be considered angels, never liable to error, infallible, unimpeachable" (see Baier, *Compendium*, I, p. 188).

statements. *The Catholic Review* of Feb. 27, 1886, said: "It is an old habit of our Protestant friends to charge Catholics with slavish submission to their priests. According to the old-time Protestant idea, a Catholic puts his conscience into his confessor's keeping; whereas the Protestant, by the invaluable right of private judgment, decides always for himself as to moral obligations of conduct." But the charge that the good Catholic yields slavish submission to the hierarchy must stand. What does the holy, infallible bull *Unam Sanctam* proclaim? "We decree that it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff. . . . He judges all things, but himself is judged by no one." The Canon Law contains the provision that "the layman has not the right and power to decide anything in the Church: his is the duty to obey" (See Fick, *Das Geheimnis der Bosheit*, p. 83). That puts the laymen in their place. And what about the bishops? In the days of Innocent III "the oath of obedience or vassalage the bishops had now to take to the Pope was understood as binding them to unconditional subjection in political as well as ecclesiastical matters. . . . Chancellor Gerson says: 'In consequence of the lust of power of the popes, the authority of bishops and inferior Church officers is completely done away with, so that they look like mere pictures in the Church, and are almost superfluous.'" At Trent "the papal legates used at once to rebuke bishops as heretics and rebels who ever dared to express any views of their own. Bishops, who have been obliged to swear 'to maintain, defend, increase, and advance the rights, honors, privileges, and authority of their lord the Pope'—and every bishop takes this oath—cannot regard themselves, or be regarded by the Christian world, as free members of a free Council." (*The Pope and The Council*, pp. 143—146, 343.) We know what happened in 1870. And "as late as November in the year of our Lord, 1885, the reigning Pope, Leo XIII, in his *Encyclical Letter Concerning the Christian Constitution of States* said to all Catholics in the world: 'In the formation of opinion, whatsoever things the Roman Pontiffs have handed down, or shall hereafter hand down, each and every one, it is necessary to hold in firm judgment well understood and as often as occasion demands openly to declare.'" Luther is right: In the papacy "the Christian Church is reduced to one man"; the creed of the papists is "I believe in the Pope at Rome" (X:278).

Why, the Catholics themselves openly avow their spiritual slavery. A Catholic layman wrote the following and *The Commonweal* (Catholic periodical) published it Oct. 7, 1931: "The Reverend John McCarthy, pastor of the Methodist Church in Bridgeton, accuses Catholics of having their priests do their

thinking for them. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Except in regard to religion and morals, we are allowed to think and do as we please. We are not priest-ridden." We are allowed, say the Catholics, to think and do as we please in secular matters, but in regard to religion and morals our priests do our thinking for us! And in his article on the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church Father E. R. Hull states: "As for freedom of private thought and opinion and taste, in all matters outside the strict limits of faith, Catholics enjoy the fullest liberty. . . . The important thing for an inquirer coming to the Catholic Church is to be thoroughly imbued with the principle of belief in the authority of the Church and to be ready to accept, in general, whatever the Church teaches as belonging to the deposit of faith" (*Religions and Philosophies in the U. S. A.*, compiled by Julius A. Weber, p. 60 f.). The Catholic theologian is here telling us that while the Catholics are proud of their liberty in the secular sphere, they are bound in the sphere of religion by the thinking and will of other men, of another man. He is saying—and every Catholic theologian who inveighs against the right of private judgment is saying—that no good Catholic can call his mind and his soul his own.

Are such things possible? Will men put their conscience into another man's keeping, thinking that they are doing God service? The members of the Society of Jesus, the most efficient papistical organization, do just that. The Jesuits have no mind and will of their own. They are trained to stifle the dictates of their conscience and are proud of their ability to do so.<sup>18)</sup> Now, not all

18) John Lord, *Beacon Lights of History*, VI, p. 311 ff.: "The most marked thing about it [the constitution of the Society of Jesus] was the unbounded and unhesitating obedience required of every member to superiors and of these superiors to the General of the Order—so that there was but one will. . . . Loyola exacted obedience to the General of the Order so absolutely that a Jesuit became a slave. A member of the society had no will of his own; he did not belong to himself, he belonged to his General. . . . He was merged body and soul into the Society; he was only a pin in the machinery; he was a piece of wax to be molded as the Superior directed—and the Superior, in his turn, was a piece of wax in the hands of the Provincial, and he again in the hands of the General. 'There were many gradations in rank, but every rank was a gradation in slavery.' The Jesuit is accused of having no individual conscience. He was bound to do what he was told, right or wrong; nothing was right, and nothing was wrong except as the Society pronounced. The General stood in the place of God. That man was happiest who was most mechanical. . . . The novice entering the order had to go through terrible discipline—to be a servant, anything; to live according to rigid rules, so that his spirit was broken by mechanical duties. He had to learn all the virtues of a slave before he could be fully enrolled in the Society. . . . Jesuitism was, of course, opposed to Protestantism; it hated the Protestants; it hated their religious creed and their emancipating and progressive spirit; it hated religious liberty. . . . The Jesuits are accused of riveting fetters on the human mind in order to uphold their power and to sustain the absolutism

adherents of the Pope are members of the Jesuit order. But in principle all Catholics are bound to what the Jesuits carry out consistently. Where the right of private judgment is disallowed, men's minds and consciences are wax in the hands of their superiors, their religious ideas molded into any form the superiors desire. Is the Pope a murderer? He trains his subjects to deaden the noblest faculties of the soul, to suppress the sense of individual responsibility in matters of faith, and to make a man their god in spite of the protest of their conscience.

The Catholics indignantly deny that they are committing idolatry when they permit the Pope to form their judgment and belief. They insist that since God has invested the Pope with His own authority,<sup>19)</sup> they are serving Christ when they bring their every

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of the popes and the absolutism of kings, to which they are equally devoted. They taught in their schools the doctrine of passive obedience; they aimed to subdue the will by rigid discipline; they were hostile to bold and free inquiries; . . . they abominated the Protestant idea of private judgment." O. Hallesby, *Conscience*, p. 33: "The Jesuits have drawn the logical conclusions from this doctrine of the Catholic Church. They maintain that conscience is in reality nothing but a *prejudicial* attitude. The Jesuit method of training seeks therefore to assist the individual to overcome, preferably to obliterate entirely, this old, ingrown prejudice and surrender himself wholly and completely to his confessor or his ecclesiastical superiors. By so doing, the individual renounces his own conscience and leaves all moral considerations and decisions to his confessor."

19) Some recent utterances. J. A. Moehler, *Symbolism or Doctrinal Differences*: "The Church interprets the Sacred Scriptures. The Church is the body of the Lord: it is his visible form — his eternal revelation. . . All the developments of its dogmas and its morality are to be revered as the sentences of Christ Himself. . . The dogmatic decrees of the episcopate (united with the general head and center) are infallible" (pp. 280, 282, 309). "Moehler says (*Neue Untersuchungen*, p. 373): 'Christ has founded a visible Church, has instituted a public, visible *magisterium*, and this He has invested with His own authority. This *magisterium*, therefore, enjoys the same authoritative credentials which Christ Himself has, and the judgment this *magisterium* pronounces on the meaning of Christ's doctrine can, consequently, claim for itself the authority of Christ Himself'" (see *Theological Studies*, 1943, p. 442). An encyclical of Pope Pius XI declares: "Three dogmas of the Catholic religion, which we shall treat principally, shine forth with brilliancy in the eyes of all; namely, that the person of Jesus Christ is one and divine; that the Blessed Virgin Mary should be acknowledged and venerated by everyone as really and truly the Mother of God; and that when matters of faith or morals are concerned, the Roman Pontiff has from on high an authority which is supreme above all others and subject to none" (see C. S. Macfarland, *Christian Unity in Practise and Prophecy*, p. 211. — Our italics.) Commenting on an encyclical by Pius XI on marriage, divorce, and birth control, *The Christian Century* of Feb. 4, 1931, says: "By far the most significant feature of the encyclical is its exhibition of the characteristic attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church with reference, first, to the subordination of individual judgment to papal authority. . . As to the first of these points, it is sufficient to cite the words of the encyclical in the section in which the Pope is speaking of the remedy for the 'modern' evils which he has enumerated. — 'Let the faithful be on their guard against the overrated independence of

thought "into captivity to the obedience of the Church" (Erasmus). It is the sacred duty of the Christian to bow to the authority of Christ, 2 Cor. 10:5; and when we Catholics bow to the authority of the Church, the Pope, who wields the absolute authority of Christ, we are performing our Christian duty. Concerning this Satanic delusion, Dr. Pieper says: "The Catholics would vindicate the teaching that the Christian must refrain from exercising his own judgment by pointing out that God, too, demands the *sacrificium intellectus et voluntatis* and that the Christians readily comply, as is seen from 2 Cor. 10:15: 'bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.' In reply we point out that God and His Word and the Pope and his word are two altogether different things and authorities. And by placing his own word beside the Word of God and *eo ipso* above God's Word, the Pope proves himself to be the Antichrist. Furthermore, as Luther reminds us, God deals altogether differently with us than the Pope. God indeed demands that man subject his intellect and will to God, but God brings this about by *illuminating*, through the power of the Holy Ghost in His Word, the intellect of man and so changing the will of man that from being unwilling he becomes willing (*ex nolente volens*). In other words, God illuminates and corrects the natural conscience, and the Pope suppresses it. (*Christliche Dogmatik III*, p. 82 f.).<sup>20)</sup> That is the crime of the papacy: the Pope has so utterly perverted and ruined the spiritual senses of his subjects that they commit the awful crime of placing a man in God's place, of making a man the lord of their conscience. The Wicked One has so utterly blinded them that they live under the

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*private judgment and that false autonomy of human reason. . . . A characteristic of all true followers of Christ is to suffer themselves to be guided and led in all things that touch upon faith and morals by the holy Church of God, through its supreme pastor, the Roman Pontiff, who is himself guided by Jesus Christ, our Lord.'* The Catholic press has obediently echoed this sentiment. 'Rome Has Spoken' is the favorite headline. 'Roma locuta, causa finita.' It is pointed out that, no matter whether this is an infallible *ex cathedra* utterance or not, and even though it is not technically a 'definition' of faith, it has absolute authority and demands absolute obedience. There is none of that airy assurance that we were given a couple of years ago that Catholic obedience is limited to certain matters which can never have anything to do with the State. Here is a matter which has plenty to do with the State, as the Pope points out, and the duty of Catholics is to guard against independence of private judgment and suffer themselves to be guided by the Pope."

20) Luther: "Human statutes cannot be observed together with the Word of God, because the former bind consciences, the latter loosens them. They are directly opposed to each other, as water to fire. Unless indeed they could be observed in liberty; that is, not to bind the conscience. But this the Pope wills not, nor can will it unless he wishes his kingdom to be destroyed and brought to an end; for that stands only in ensnaring and binding those consciences which the Gospel declares to be free" (XVIII:1710).

Satanic delusion that the idolatrous service they are rendering the Pope is the holy bondage with which God blesses His people.

Summarizing these findings, we shall say that the Pope exacts from his subjects the *sacrificium fidei*. The faith which he demands is not the Christian faith. The faith which God creates is *personal* knowledge, *personal* conviction, *personal* faith. "The just shall live by *his* *faith*," Rom. 1:17; Hab. 2:4. Luther: "You will not be damned or saved by another's doctrine, be it false or true, but by your own personal belief" (X:1587). "It is at everyone's own peril how he believes, and he must see for himself that he believes aright. For as little as another can go to hell or to heaven for me, so little also can he believe or disbelieve for me" (X:398). "The Pope is not judge in matters pertaining to God's Word and faith; but every Christian man must see and judge for himself, even as he must live and die according to it" (XV:1915). For such a faith the Pope has no use. And the Catholic Christian, if he would obey the papal injunction against the exercise of private judgment, must refrain from exercising his personal faith. What the result will be we have noted above.—The Pope is the archriminal. He subverts the chief article, justification by faith, by teaching (a) that justification is by works and (b) by destroying the true concept of faith.<sup>21)</sup>

Men who permit themselves to be deprived of the right, and neglect to perform the duty, of private judgment make a fatal mistake. It may result, in the third place, in the loss of eternal salvation. The spiritual blight, of which we have just spoken, will end, if things take their natural course, in spiritual death. And this spiritual death may set in at any moment. In an evil day the strength to withstand the assault of the Evil One may be lacking. In the fierce battle of faith the poor creature who is lacking in spiritual stamina is facing defeat.

He will, for instance, fall an easy prey to false doctrine. False doctrine is not an innocent, harmless affair. The loss of eternal salvation is involved. Jesus calls the false teachers "wolves," Matt. 7:15. St. Peter uses the term "damnable heresies," 2 Pet. 2:1,

21) The following quotations apply here in a general way. Dr. Francis Hall: "It is true that *personal* belief, however reached, springs from an act of private judgment, which in that sense is supreme for individual faith and practice. . . . Belief which is not ultimately due to private judgment has no personal reality" (*The Living Church*, March 7, 1930). Dr. W. J. S. Simpson told those who were about ready to accept the dogma of papal infallibility against their better knowledge why they must "not make a sacrifice of their intellect. Because if you destroy a man's confidence in his historic judgment in one instance, you ruin its validity in all others. Now, since it is by such a judgment that Christianity itself is accepted, to bid a man disparage his own judgment of history, is to undermine the very basis of his religion." (*Roman Catholic Opposition to Papal Infallibility*, p. 289).

destructive heresies, heresies of perdition, teachings which lead into eternal damnation. The gross heresies do that directly. But every false teaching exposes its adherents to the danger of losing their faith and their eternal salvation. It is, therefore, "for their salvation" that "Christians must distinguish between pure and false doctrine" (*Formula of Concord*, p. 853). In order "to know and avoid wolves, Matt. 7:15," God authorizes and requires "each and every Christian to judge of doctrines; for every one must know the difference between true and false doctrine" (Luther, XXI A:399). "Ein jeder glaubt auf seine Gefahr recht oder falsch" (XIX:342). Those who have lost, or never had, the faculty to distinguish between saving doctrine and destructive doctrine are exposed to eternal damnation; and if such a one should lose his soul eternally, his blood is upon the head of those who denied him the right of private judgment.<sup>22)</sup>

22) There are those who do that in order that they may spread their false doctrine without let and hindrance. The Pope employs that Satanic strategy. Luther: "Now you can see what sort of spirit possessed these odious councils. . . . They took away from the people the right to judge and conferred it upon the popes. Without a doubt that was the contrivance of Satan by which he filled the world with strong delusions and put the abomination in the holy place. False teachers fear the right of the people to judge doctrine; taking from them this right, he established and secured his tyranny in the most effective way. The foolish and superstitious obedience and patience of the people prepared the way for the deluge of heresies and abominations" (XIX:343). As long as the Pope can suppress the right of private judgment and keep his people from appealing to Scripture, his reign is secure. That is one of his chief strongholds and defenses. Luther: "The papists, with great adroitness, have built three walls about them, behind which they have hitherto defended themselves in such wise that no one has been able to reform them; and this has been the cause of terrible corruption throughout all Christendom. . . . Second, when the attempt is made to reprove them out of the Scriptures, they set up the claim that the interpretation of the Scriptures belongs to no one except the Pope. . . . In this way they have cunningly stolen from us our three rods" (footnote in Holman, II, p. 65: "The three rods for the punishment of an evil pope"), "that they may go unpunished, and have entrenched themselves within the safe stronghold of these three walls, to practice all knavery and wickedness; do we not see it?" (X:269 f.) Again: "One hears scarcely anything else from them but the boast that they have the power and the right to judge what is Christian and what is heretical; the plain Christian must await their decision and abide by it. . . . With this claim of theirs they have intimidated the whole world: it is their chief *stronghold and defense* (X:1540). What would happen if the Pope should permit the Christians under his sway to test his doctrine of justification by Rom. 3:28? "They would boldly," says Luther, "pronounce sentence against the Pope. . . . Here, saith the Christian, this that by the merit of congruence we must come to grace and that afterward by the merit of worthiness we are received into heaven is not the right way to justify us. For I cannot, saith the Christian, by my works going before grace deserve grace, nor by my works following grace deserve eternal life; but to him that believeth, sin is pardoned and righteousness imputed" (VIII:184).

And as to the fundamental doctrine of the papacy, the infallibility

Again — and now we come to the all-important point — what will be our support and stay when the dread hour of death is upon us? How will those poor souls who in the matter of faith have no convictions of their own fare on the day that decides their eternal fate? Ponder the solemn statement with which Luther began the first of the eight Wittenberg sermons: "Wir sind alle zum Tod gefordert, und wird keiner fuer den andern sterben; sondern ein jeglicher in eigener Person muss geharnischt und geruestet sein, fuer sich selbst mit dem Teufel und Tode zu kaempfen, Hebr. 9:27. In die Ohren koennen wir wohl einer dem andern schreien, ihn troesten und vermahnen zur Geduld, zum Streit und Kampf; aber fuer ihn koennen wir nicht kaempfen noch streiten, es muss ein jeglicher allda auf seine Schanze selbst sehen und sich mit den Feinden, mit dem Teufel und Tode, selbst einlegen und allein mit ihnen im Kampfe liegen. Ich werde dann nicht bei dir sein, noch du bei mir." (XX:8. Weimar Ed., X:3. See Holman II, p. 391.) The faith that saves is personal faith. "The just shall live by his faith." The Pope does not believe that. J. Clayton condemns "the new theology" of Luther, which demanded the right of "private judgment . . . and promised assurance of personal salvation" (*op. cit.*, p. 84). The Pope's theology does not want men to have the personal assurance of salvation, and those who apply his theology will in the dread hour of death lose their souls. Their reliance on the Pope's assurances cannot

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of the Pope: keep the people from exercising their Christian judgment, and all is well. See footnote 9. The Pope cannot afford to let people judge his teaching by Scripture. "Emser and the Pope's men cannot be blamed if they shrink from doing this themselves or permitting others to do it, for if they allowed us to force them to prove their contentions by clear Scripture — God help them; then their abominations would be revealed, and they could not deny that they are under the sway of Antichrist, leading astray the whole world under the cloak of the Church and the priesthood" (XVIII:1295). See also Smalcald Articles, Tract. Par. 51, 56. Pieper: "Liesse der Papst seinen Fundamentalsatz von der Dunkelheit der heiligen Schrift fahren, dann koennte er abdanken. . . . Ja, auch seine sogenannte 'Unfehlbarkeit' wuerde ihm nichts helfen, wenn er den Satz von der Klarheit der heiligen Schrift stehen liesse, denn dann wuerden die Christen mit der Schrift auch ueber ihn urteilen" (*Vortraege*, p. 43). *The Calvin Forum*, October, 1943: "Such a mouth could not remain closed when Tetzel came selling indulgences for actual or contemplated sin. In vain do Catholics today defend that scandal by saying that they still must cater to the 'ignorance of many Catholics.' It is to be feared that *the whole hierarchy was reared on the rotten foundation of lay ignorance.*" John Lord: "The Catholics said, in substance: 'We, too, accept the Scriptures. . . . But who can interpret them? Can peasants and women or even merchants and nobles? . . . We, the priests, will keep Scripture out of their hands. They will get notions from it fatal to our authority; they will become fanatics; they will, in their conceit, defy us.' . . . Few of the Catholic clergy have ever tolerated religious liberty — that is, the interpretation of the Scriptures by the people — for it is a vital blow to their supremacy, their hierarchy, and their institutions" (*op. cit.*, VI, pp. 236, 242).

stand in the face of Satan's query: Are you sure of God's grace and forgiveness? The man who has not learned to deal with God's Word must end his life in despair. Hear Luther's warning: "Thou must speak in this wise: Pope, you and your councils have made decrees—but it is for me to decide whether I may accept them or must reject them. Why? Because you will not stand and answer for me when I must die, but I must see for myself where I stand; I must be sure of my case.—For you must be so certain that it is God's Word as certain you are that you are living, nay, even more certain; for on this alone your conscience may rest. Even if all men should come, yes, the angels, too, and all the world decide something, if you cannot grasp nor form the judgment, you are lost; for you must not base your belief on the Pope nor on anyone else; you must be able to say for yourself: This God says, that He does not say; this is right, that is wrong; in no other way can you maintain yourself. . . . For if in the hour of death you rely on the Pope and the councils and say: This the Pope has said; that the councils have decided; the holy fathers Augustine, Ambrose, have so judged, the devil will soon rip apart your confidence; he will at once suggest: What if this be false? What if they have erred? If Satan gets you into such a place, you are already overcome. Therefore, take the only safe course: you must boldly and confidently say: Here is God's Word; on that I will stake body and life and would risk a thousand necks if I had them. Your neck is in danger, your life is at stake. . . . It is absolutely necessary that you be able to say: This God has said; that God has not said. When you begin to say: That man has said it, the councils have so decreed, you are building on sand" (XI:1395—1399).

He who in the dark day of spiritual affliction and in the dread hour of death pleads a human authority for his faith is lost. Satan will drive him into despair. Hear Luther once more: "When you must die, I shall not be with you, nor will the Pope be with you. If, then, you do not know the reason of your hope and say: I believe what the councils, the Pope, and our Fathers have believed, the devil will reply: Yea, but what if they have erred? And he will have the best of it and drive you into hell. Hence we must know what we believe; we must believe what God's Word teaches, not what Pope and council order and decree. For you must by no means trust in men, but base your faith on the Word of God alone. . . . If you say with other fools: Nay, let us hear what the council decides, by that we will abide, you are lost. . . . I hear you say: Yes, but questions of faith present such a confused matter that we cannot know for certain what to believe, we must wait till somebody decides it for us. I tell you: If you

take that attitude, you will fare badly. For if you, when you lie expiring on your deathbed, do not know what you should believe, neither I nor anyone else can help you. Therefore you must know yourself what to believe and not depend on any man, but cling to God's Word; only in that way can you escape the devil and hell. . . . You must be able to give the reason for your faith. You must do it in life and certainly in the hour of death. . . . If in that hour the devil finds you unprepared and unable to give the reason for your faith, he will have you in his power" (IX:1236 ff.).

When a Catholic Christian dies in peace, it is only because he refuses to follow the directives of the Pope. The ministration of the Pope can, of itself, result only in doubt, in despair. He and his Protestant colleagues are indeed what Luther calls them—murderers.

The old evil Foe means deadly woe. And do not let Satan tell you that the Pope no longer practices his wickedness. The Pope denounces the exercise of private judgment today as vehemently as ever. The papal bulls and encyclicals we have quoted emanated in the Dark Ages—and in the present age. The formal Declaration of Infallibility issued from the mouth of a modern Pope. We heard not only Erasmus and Emser, but also modern leaders of the Catholic Church such as Cardinal Gibbons inveighing against Luther's doctrine of the right of private judgment as damnable wickedness. The Pope's theologians of today have not modified the old papal teaching one whit.<sup>23)</sup> Do not let men tell

23) A few additional pronouncements. *The Truth About Catholics*, edition of March 1, 1936, says on page 2: "What is the means God has given us whereby we shall learn what He has taught? 'The Bible,' say our Protestant friends, 'and nothing but the Bible.' But we Catholics say 'No; not the Bible but the Church of God.' Christ did not say, 'Sit down and write Bibles and let every man read and judge for himself.' That injunction was reserved for the sixteenth century. . . . Christ does not say, 'He that will not read the Scriptures,' but 'he that will not hear the Church' is to be considered a heathen and publican." Di Bruno: "Catholics do well to read and study the Holy Scriptures for their greater instruction and edification, but always in a spirit of submission to the Catholic Church, so as never to prefer their own private view to the known interpretation and teaching of 'the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth' (1 Tim. 3:15). It was the unheard-of system of private interpretation, brought in by the Reformers in disparagement of that of the Church, that caused her to put in general some restrictions to private reading" (*Catholic Belief*, p. 43). Bishop John F. Noll wants men to say: "I could not lead myself to believe that God wanted me to get my religion, a knowledge of His will, by searching the Scriptures myself. . . . I read of a Church, from which Christ commanded me to get my faith: 'If he will not hear the Church, let him be as the heathen and publican'" (*Why You Should Be a Catholic*, p. 8 f.). Bishop Noll put his *Imprimatur* on a tract written by the Rev. J. A. O'Brien, *Is Our Religion as Good as Another*, which says: "Religious indifferentism had its unconscious origin in the principle ushered into the world by Martin Luther in the sixteenth century, namely, the principle of the supremacy of private judgment in the

you differently. The well-meaning Roman Catholic woman who says that the Roman Catholic Church "is no longer what it was in Luther's day" and therefore asked the Witness to "stop attacking" the Roman Catholic Church, does not realize wherein the real wickedness of the papacy consists. (See *Lutheran Witness*, 1943, p. 401.) And here is a Lutheran ex-pastor, F. W. Schuchard, who advocates union with the Catholic Church and cannot see that the Pope is the Antichrist. In a pamphlet issued by him he says: "The great leaders of the 'Hochkirche' in Germany, who are standing on the shoulders of such Lutheran giants as Pfarrer Wilhelm Loehe and Professor A. F. C. Vilmar, are looking over

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interpretation of the Scriptures and as a guide in the religious life. Luther's example became infectious. Soon Calvin, Zwingli, Hus, and others proceeded to give their own divergent interpretation to Scriptural texts, and thus established creeds of their own." Father E. R. Hull: "Catholics consider that the Bible was never intended for the sole and adequate Rule of faith, partly because it is not a sufficiently exhaustive account of all of Christ's teaching, partly because its expressions of doctrine are often ambiguous and require authoritative interpretation. . . . When once convinced that the living voice of the Catholic Church is authorized and guaranteed by Christ, the only rational course is to accept that authority as a means of ascertaining Christ's teaching; and instead of resenting it, we ought to be thankful for the gift. . . . As supreme teacher, the Pope possesses authority to settle disputed points of faith and morals. . . . When, acting in his highest official capacity of teacher of the Universal Church, the Pope defines a point of faith or morals with the intent of binding the whole Church — then we believe, by virtue of Christ's promise, that the decision will be infallibly right." (See Weber, *Religions and Philosophies*, p. 57 ff.) Bishop Keane of Wyoming: "The Scriptures make no profession of being an adequate and complete record of the truths taught by Jesus Christ. . . . It cannot be the depository of the truths revealed by Jesus Christ or the organum of its propagation." (See *Theological Quarterly*, XVI, p. 198.) J. A. Moehler: "Next the proposition was advanced [by Luther] that Holy Writ is the sole fountainhead, standard, and judge in matters of faith. The Epitome says: 'Credimus, confitemur et docemus, unicam regulam et normam, ex qua omnia dogmata omnesque doctores judicari porteat, nullam omnino aliam esse, quam prophetica et apostolica, tum veteris, tum novi Testamenti Scripta': [See Triglotta, p. 776.] . . . The Reformers rejected the mediating authority of the Church, which guided the intellectual activity of each individual. . . . They concluded that Catholics are in error because they interpret Holy Writ according to the authority of the Church" (*Symbolism*, p. 314 f.). America, Feb. 25, 1939: "To the Protestant, every man's conscience is a sure guide for a life of virtue, but the most elementary psychology teaches that conscience is little more than a blend of desire plus the influence of the past. The Catholic need rely upon nothing within his own highly fallible spirit, but can rest his faith upon the Church. If the Protestant's conscience seems to tell him something that is at variance with what he hears in church, conscience is presumed to be right. The Protestant, then, cannot know the security of reliance upon some power, some institution older, stronger than himself." Cardinal O'Connell, in *The Pilot*, Dec. 21, 1923: "The Church is above the Scriptures, because it is the official custodian and unerring interpreter of Holy Writ." — Luther's statement covers the situation of today: "Solches greulichen Bruellens ist viel in seinen geistlichen Rechten und Bullen" (XIX: 933).

the old wall of separation and are discovering all the beauty of the Catholic Church which our fathers were told to leave behind and are enjoying it more, as it seems, than their older brother, who never left his 'Father's' home. In union there is strength. The Antichrist is mobilizing and gaining ground every day, profiting mostly by the disunion of Christians." And there are many other Lutherans, and Protestants in general, who cannot see the Antichrist in the Pope. The Pope of Luther's day, some say, may have been the Antichrist, but the papacy has improved, and you must look for Antichrist somewhere else. These men either do not know that the Pope has not changed his teaching one whit, or they do not realize the antichristian wickedness of the denial of the right of private judgment and of the denouncing and anathematizing of the exercise of this blessed right. These men are derelict in their duty towards the Church. The eternal salvation of men is at stake; and shall we not lift up our warning voice? The papacy of today is the papacy of the past, and what Luther said of "all those who hold that the Pope is the judge of Scripture and that the Church rules over Scripture" (IX:86, on Gal. 1:9) must be repeated by us today in its full force.

The old evil Foe means deadly woe—he has raised up others besides the Pope who deny the common Christians the right to judge doctrine. There are the theologians of the stripe of the great Ritschl, who, when a layman charged him with denying the Scriptural doctrines of original sin, of the atonement, and of the real presence of the Lord's body and blood in the Lord's Supper and asked the synod to take action against these heresies, indignantly protested against this "monumental impertinence." "The monumental impertinence of the layman who has not made the study of scientific theology his profession, but still feels competent to criticize the results of the intellectual labor of the scholar who has devoted years of study to this subject!" Dr. Pieper says: "Das ist papistischer Greuel in der ausgeprägtesten Gestalt innerhalb einer lutherisch sich nennenden Kirche" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1888, p. 1). The minister who wants his people to accept his teachings blindly, on the strength of the minister's superior learning and official position, has set himself up as a pope. The theologian who expects his Church, laity and clergy, to follow him, not because they have found his teaching to be in agreement with Scripture, but because they bow to his superior learning and the influence of his official position in the Church, is committing a popish abomination. And when he declares the plain laymen and the common clergy to be incompetent to examine and judge his teachings, his impertinence has reached the height of popish impudence. Such theologians have no place in Christ's Church—for "Christ

assigns the judgment not to prophets and teachers, but to the pupils, or the sheep. All teachers should and must, therefore, be subject with their teaching to the judgment of the hearers" (Luther, X:1542) — and they are a curse to the Church. Ruling the conscience of their followers, they ruin it.<sup>24)</sup> And having deprived their following of their spiritual judgment, they have a free hand to introduce any kind of error and heresy into the Church. Werner Elert points out what happens when the laity and clergy blindly follow the leaders. "What would have become of our Church if the right to establish doctrine had been granted, say, to the spnodical officials of the land? Or to the theological faculties? The outcome might easily have been that Harnack's *Wesen des Christentums* would today be the doctrine of our Church" (Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzeitung, Oct. 30, 1936). — One pope was too much; shall we now have many popes?<sup>25)</sup>

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24) Oh, yes, the ministers rule the conscience of their people, but only in this wise: "Regnum enim conscientiarum vindicamus nobis per verbum und wollen uns nicht lassen nehmen. — Das Regiment ueber die Gewissen massen wir Theologen uns eigentlich an und sagen, dass er unser sei durchs Wort, wollens uns auch nicht nehmen lassen durch keinerlei Weise" (Luther. Weimar Ed., T. R. II, p. 354). The faithful ministers and theologians bind the conscience of the people with God's Word; where the Word of God has spoken, they will not permit men to have their own opinion. — The theologians with popish proclivities subscribe only to the first part of Luther's statement.

25) Theodore Traub said that. Discussing Dr. Otto Baumgarten's statement that "our laymen have got to learn that on the question of the institution of the Lord's Supper, albeit it is of vital interest to their faith, none but the theological experts are competent to judge," he exclaims: "Das fehlte gerade noch, dass wir statt des einen unfehlbaren Papstes die vielen religionsgeschichtlichen Professoren mit ihren vielen sich widersprechenden Behauptungen als Autoritaeten in Glaubenssachen annehmen muessten" (*Handreichung fuer Glauben und Leben*, p. 72). Let us hear some similar declarations. *The Lutheran Sentinel*, Jan. 27, 1939: "Concerning certain doctrinal disagreements, a certain pastor said: 'I cannot cope with the questions at issue and leave it to the higher theologians to make the decision.' . . . No one need despair of finding the truth however unschooled in this world's wisdom, for of the Bible it is said: 'In all things the knowledge of which is necessary to salvation, it is plain enough for those who use it rightly, whether they are ignorant or learned (Pantoppidan).' " *The Pastor's Monthly*, 1935, p. 40: "When experts become dictators, liberty ceases. This is true in the common affairs of life, and it is true in the realm of religion. What is the great liberalist movement but an attempt of experts self-styled to foist upon Christians their opinions? The smoke screen of superior scholastic attainments blinds the eyes, the sonorous tones of polished oratory tickles the ears, and men are fooled into sacrificing their right of private judgment and accepting the dicta of those who pose as angels of light and advancement while they stand in secret league with the Prince of Darkness and retrogression. No man can transfer to another his right of private judgment. The man who fails to exercise that right, be he pastor or layman, has lost his liberty. The pastor . . . who accepts the statements of supposed experts or even of those who are in truth experts, without verifying them by the Word, becomes again a slave, and instead of aiding his people in maintaining their liberty assists in

Finally, we have the great host of the Romanizing Protestants, including the Romanizing Lutherans, who are telling the individual Christian that he cannot know whether a doctrine is true, is Scriptural, till the Church has told him so, that he cannot understand, interpret Scripture without "the living voice," the *viva vox* of the Church, that he must rest his faith on the decision of some nebulous "council" of the universal Church, etc. They say, in general, that the "Church" has equal authority with Scripture and, specifically, that Scripture means nothing until the "Church" interprets it. "*The Second World Conference*," edited by L. Hodgson, states: "Some of us hold that the Church under the guidance of the Spirit is entrusted with the authority to explain, interpret, and complete the teaching of the Bible, and consider the witness of the Church as given in tradition as equally authoritative with the Bible itself." Dr. C. C. Morrison complains in *The Christian Century*, Nov. 2, 1938, that "Protestantism has given to the Church a subordinate position," not realizing that the doctrines of Christianity "all derive their Christian meaning from the continuous communal life of the Christian Church." And in his book *What Is Christianity?* he says: "Not the Bible, but the living Church, the body of Christ, is the true Word of God." Dr. H. P. Sloan: "This Christian consensus . . . is the living voice, guiding the Church from generation to generation in its interpretation of the written record" (*The Christ of the Ages*, p. 155). The Episcopalian H. P. Scratchley says in *The Living Church*, May 5, 1934: "The Bible is the Church's book, to be interpreted by its teaching, rather than the teaching of the Church by the Bible." And the Episcopalian Dr. B. I. Bell "contends for a liberal catholicism in which authority rests on the collective reaction of Christendom to revelation" (quoted from *The Living Church* in *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, 1942, p. 229). There are many Lutherans, too, who are

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binding upon them the yoke of bondage. . . ." Luther: "God forbid that I should presume to exercise authority over other preachers and rule over them, lest I also establish a papacy; but I will commit them to Christ, who alone shall rule over His preachers in Christendom" (X:1524).—Here would be the place to record a historical curiosity: Luther, too, played the pope! So say the Catholics. In his book *Luther Examined and Re-Examined* Dr. Dau has a chapter dealing with the charge that "Luther was the destroyer of the liberty of conscience"; "the Catholics claim that Luther had indeed adopted the principle of 'private interpretation' of the Scriptures, however, only for himself. He was unwilling to accord to others the right which he claimed for himself" (p. 190 ff.). J. Clayton has taken up this cry. "Private judgment was right enough when it coincided with Luther's judgment. It was nothing but an imposition of the devil when it was contrary to the Lutheran program." "Till his death Luther was never reconciled to the exercise of a private judgment in religion that brought departure from Lutheranism" (*op. cit.*, p. 107).

saying that without the *viva vox* of the Church the individual Christian cannot get the real meaning of Scripture and that he cannot be sure of the truth of any doctrine till "the Church has spoken." Leaders of our Church have in our days set up the principle that a doctrine can be received as Scriptural only when the Church has so decided. (See *Proceedings, Western District*, 1901, p. 53.) They have been ringing the changes on the slogan: "Die Kirche hat noch nicht gesprochen." The right to judge doctrine which the Lutherans will not grant the Pope the modern Lutherans assign to the "Church."

These men are establishing a Protestant popedom. And in suppressing the right of private judgment they are working hand in glove with the Pope for the ruin of the Church. What Luther said to the Romanists of his day, he is saying to the Protestant Romanizers of our day: "They say, we must wait till the Church has decided it; let the devil wait for that; I cannot wait that long" (VIII:100). The day of affliction and doubt and the hour of death will be upon me before the church councils have decided; and if they have decided, the devil will ask me: What if the councils have erred? (Luther; see above.) It is a fundamental error, touching the foundation of our faith, to give the "Church" the right to produce "saving" doctrine,<sup>26)</sup> and there can be no personal saving faith if it is made to rest on the findings and decisions of "councils." It is an evil thing. "The theology," says Walther, "which operates on the principle: 'Die Kirche hat noch nicht gesprochen,' is a daughter of Rationalism parading in a Christian dress, a sister of Romanism hiding behind a Protestant mask, and a fecund mother of large families of heresies." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1868, p. 134 and *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, 1939, p. 507. See also *Lutheraner*, X, p. 191.) Read Walther's essay: "Wie verwerflich es sei, Sachen des Glaubens aus den Schriften der Vaeter begruenden und die Gewissen an die Lehrentscheidungen derselben binden zu wollen" (*Proceedings, Synodical Conference*, 1884). Ponder the words of J. G. Machen: "Those who hold to this view (that takes as the test of truth and of life the pronouncements and regulations of the Church) do not usually deny

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26) Dr. Hardeland declared at a Lutheran conference in Mecklenburg: "Der Glaube ruht auf dem Wort der Propheten und Apostel. Wir haben heutiges Tages das Wort der Apostel und Propheten nirgends als in der Schrift. Von den *Dorpatern* ist ausgesprochen, dass ein *selbststaendiger*" [also nicht ein fort und fort aus der Schrift ausfliessender] Strom des geistlichen Zeugnisses fortlebe in der Kirche bis auf den heutigen Tag. *Das ist ein grundstuerzender Irrtum*, es ist Schwarmgeisterei, oder es naehert sich dem Romanismus. . . . Will mir der heilige Geist etwas offenbaren, etwas ganz Neues, so sage ich zu ihm: *Hebe dich weg von mir, Satan!*" Walther comments in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1886, p. 309: "Vortrefflich."

the authority of the Bible in so many words. What they do is to say—by implication, if not in words—that the Bible is interpreted authoritatively by the 'living church.' 'When a man becomes a minister or a member of a church,' they say in effect, 'it is his duty to support the program of that church. He may think that it is contrary to the Bible; but never mind, it is not his business in this particular matter to think; he must submit his judgment to the judgment of the councils of his church; he must let them interpret the Bible for him and must make the message that he supports conform to their shifting votes.' In sharp distinction from that view, we make the Bible, and the Bible only, the test of truth and of life. There is no living authority to interpret the Bible for us. We must read it everyone for himself and must ask God to help us as we read. A Church that commands us to support any program on the authority of the decisions of the Church is usurping in the interests of fallible men an authority that belongs only to God. . . . God grant that you, my brothers, may be ministers of another kind! May God send us ministers who come forth into their pulpits from a secret place of meditation and prayer, who are servants of Christ and not servants of men, who, be they ever so humble, are ambassadors of the King, who, as they stand behind the open Bible and expound its blessed words, can truly and honestly say, with Micaiah, the son of Imlah: 'As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak.' " (*The Christian Faith in the Modern World*, p. 84 f.) But the minister trained by the Romanizing Protestants cannot speak thus. He must say: "Thus saith the Church." It is an evil thing. He robs himself and his hearers of the assurance of faith. And he sells himself and his hearers into spiritual slavery. Verily, they who suppress the right of the Christian to judge doctrine and make the Church the judge and interpreter of Scripture are doing an accursed thing (Luther XIX:341. IX:86).<sup>27)</sup>

27) We do not shut our ears to "the voice of the Church." The title of Walther's classic is: "Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt." And discussing this book, Dr. Dau writes: "The right and duty of private judgment are never impaired by the interpretation of another; but it can be clarified, strengthened, and confirmed by the understanding which another has gained of a given Bible text" (*Walther and the Church*, p. 52). Similarly *The Pulpit Commentary* says: "Our teachers are not intended to see for us, which is the Roman Catholic idea, but to help us to see for ourselves." (On 1 John 2: 20, 27.) Chemnitz: "Gratefully and reverently we make use of the works of the Fathers, who have in their commentaries placed many Scripture passages before us in their true light and have been of great help to us for the better understanding of Scripture." (*Examen*, loc. cit.). Luther "had a great respect for the fathers and teachers like Augustine, etc., " "for the patres have written many good and useful things" (XXII: 1390, 1404), and listened attentively to the voice of truth speaking through his contemporaries. We cannot afford to disregard

(2) But blessed is the community where the right of private judgment is recognized and practiced. "The right of private judgment does not endanger the Church, but establishes it all the more firmly upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles of which Jesus Christ is the chief Cornerstone" (*The Pastor's Monthly, op. cit.*). The Church whose members are able to make an intelligent use of God's Word is in a position to perform its duties towards those within and those without the Church. There are those who need instruction, reproof, consolation. Who shall take care of them? Again: "It is the duty of the congregation to care for the purity of doctrine and life in its midst and to exercise church discipline in these matters. Matt. 18:15-18: 'Tell it unto the Church.' Rom. 16:17 'Mark them which cause divisions, etc.'" (*Proper Form of a Lutheran Congregation*, Thesis 7). Who shall perform this duty? Once more: "It is incumbent upon the congregation to do its part in building up and promoting the welfare of the church at large, bringing the Gospel to those who still sit in darkness and in the shadow of death" (Thesis 11, 62). Who shall broadcast this sweet voice of the Church? It is the duty and privilege of all Christians. "All the members of the congregation must strive to grow and be enriched, in all utterances and in all knowledge, that they may not remain children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, but try to judge by the Word of God the doctrine preached to them" (Thesis 26). All Christians, all of them incumbents of the royal priesthood, are to show forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light (Thesis 63). The clergy alone cannot do the work of the Church. The old Lutheran theologian Quistorp said: "As long as the congregation of saints will not join hands with us, letting the burden rest on the shoulders of the poor preachers alone, no betterment of the times is in sight." (See *Walther and the Church*, p. 104.) The pastor cannot reach all.

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the "voice of the Church." "Walther declared it to be arrogance which God would punish if, in getting doctrine out of the Scripture, a person refuses to be aided by others or would not study the writings of the great teachers, but endeavored to find everything in Scripture himself. See note to §3 of his *Pastorale*" (F. Pieper, *Conversion and Election*, p. 96). And a writer in *The Journal of Theology of the A. L. Conference*, 1943, p. 204, says: "The Episcopalians insist that it is the Church which interprets the Scripture. To be sure, it would be folly to ignore the testimony of the Church, as to the meaning of Scripture, as that testimony comes down to us through the ages. Such an attitude would be as foolish as for a scientist to ignore the accumulated results of scientific research." We need the "voice of the Church," the help and Christian testimony of the brethren. But that does not mean that we get the saving doctrine from the Church. The writer just quoted says: "It is the Word which gives to the Church any authority which she possesses. The Word is the primary source of authority." It is folly and wickedness to look to the Church to decide questions of doctrine for us.

In many a case the layman has the first opportunity to counsel, admonish, console the brother. The layman has opportunities to meet people—in the shop, on the street—which the pastor does not have. Sometimes it is the layman, not the pastor, who is invited to address public gatherings and called upon by God to proclaim the saving Gospel. And the pastor himself is in continuous need of the counsel and consolation of the members of his church. The Church needs "lay theologians." Where the conditions prevail about which Chrysostomus complained ("He often took the laymen severely to task for leaving the study of Scripture to the monks and not caring to search the Scriptures themselves in order to see whether that which was taught in the Church agreed with Scripture"), the laymen, having no firm convictions, easily fall prey to the ecclesiastical rabble rouser. The Church needs "lay theologians." At Nicaea, "when all the bishops failed to confute a sophist, a layman at last took the floor (a man of most simple parts, not at all trained in speaking) through whom God would show that His kingdom does not stand in words or in the exalted position of the bishops, but in power. This layman confounded the sophist, who voluntarily confessed that he was beaten and turned to the Christian religion." (See *Theological Monthly*, 1929, p. 238.) There have been times, too, when the clergy refused to do its duty, and Luther had to write his treatise "on the reform of the Christian estate, to be laid before the Christian nobility of the German Nation, in the hope that God may deign to help His Church through the efforts of the laity, since the clergy, to whom this task more properly belongs, have grown quite indifferent" (X:266). And if the clergy is faithful in the performance of its duty, that does not relieve the laity of its duty. Each and every member of the Church must contribute his share if the Church shall have full success in her mission. Blessed is that community where "every Christian teaches, instructs, admonishes, comforts, and reproves his neighbor with the Word of God, wherever this is necessary" (Luther V:1038), "so that, in addition to the public ministry, the Word of God dwells richly among them, both publicly and privately, both generally and individually" (XII:394); where, in the words of Dr. Pieper, all spiritual priests proclaim the inspired Word to their fellow men, as Is. 40:9 asks them to do: "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength," "the terms *Zion* and *Jerusalem* designating not merely the preachers, but the entire Christian Church" (*What Is Christianity?* p. 140); where, in the words of Philip Schaff, the laity no longer occupies the degrading position of passive obedience, but enjoys the privileges of the royal priesthood, the right and duty

of every believer to read the Word of God in his vernacular tongue, to go directly to the Throne of Grace, and to take an active part in all the affairs of the Church according to his peculiar gift and calling (see *Four Hundred Years*, p. 289) — blessed is that Church; it is accomplishing the work which the Lord gave it to perform.

*The Christian Century*, Nov. 17, 1943, declares: "The strength of Protestantism depends at last upon the laity's having sound and intelligent Christian convictions." Yes indeed; the Word of God is the strength of the Church, and that Church whose clerical and lay members form their judgments by the Word of God and speak out with the firm conviction and assurance which the Word of God gives wields a mighty force; the power of God is back of it. We want all the members of our Church to wield this power. We are not afraid, God is not afraid, to entrust them with it. Some have misgivings about this matter. *The Christian Century* said on Nov. 30, 1938: "If the right of private judgment is granted, differences of opinion are inevitable. The truth is that Protestantism has always been a little fearful of the right of private judgment and has handled that principle gingerly and with grave doubts as to its workability." The old, genuine Protestantism never had these misgivings. There is, naturally, plenty of room for misgivings when liberal Protestantism permits men to form their judgment independently of Scripture; that exercise of private judgment is pernicious. But where men subject their judgment to Scripture and form their judgment by Scripture, there is no danger of "differences of opinion." What happens is that these men proclaim the truth of God's Word with a united voice and with firm convictions. And such a laity the Church needs. *The Lutheran Sentinel*, Nov. 27, 1943, says: "In our dear Lutheran Church we take it for granted that matters of doctrine are as much a concern of the man in the *pew* as it is for the man in the *pulpit*. And we hold our parishioners responsible for carefully watching over what is proclaimed from the pulpit or taught in the official publications of our Church. From Luther we have gotten this excellent bit of sound counsel on this score: 'It is the sheep which must determine whether or no the voice is that of the Shepherd.' . . . Yes, the laity can be trusted. But it must be an enlightened laity, a laity which daily searches the Scriptures, studies its precious Confessions, protests against anything appearing in the church body's official organs which is not in accord with the truth or at best but an half-truth. We have absolutely nothing to fear from an enlightened, consecrated laity. What Thomas Jefferson said regarding political questions may be applied with equal force to questions in the spiritual realm: 'Whenever the people are well informed, they can be trusted with their own government.'" The

Church needs not only an enlightened clergy, but also a laity which can wield the power of God's Word. Walther wanted such men. Dr. Pfotenhauer writes: "The writings of Walther here appearing in English were originally presented not to Walther's theological classes or to pastoral conferences but to synodical conventions made up one half of lay delegates. And when they first appeared, they were eagerly read by many of our congregation members, thus helping to rear a laity well grounded in Scriptural principles" (*Walther and the Church*, p. IV). That makes for a strong Church. Blessed is the community in which the Word of Christ dwells richly in all wisdom, where all pastors and laymen, men and women, old and young, are trained to apply Scripture to every religious matter and are ready to utter their convictions before friend and foe.

And blessed are the ministers of Jesus Christ who labor to bring that about. God asks His ministers to urge upon their people the duty of exercising private judgment and to fit them to pronounce a Christian judgment. The Christian minister is glad to do that. He does not consider it a degradation of his high office to let the Christian hearers judge his teaching. They are judging it by God's Word, and in asking for their judgment he is bowing not to men, but to God. And he always bears in mind that these people are his equals. He suppresses the papistical thoughts continually arising in his flesh that only the clergy is fit to judge doctrine and run the affairs of the synod and the congregation. He does not look upon the Christian people as a witless rabble, but sees them as members of the royal priesthood, fitted by God to perform the duties of their high office.<sup>28)</sup> And he is happy to know that through his teaching and instruction God is fitting His people for their glorious work. Moreover, he himself loves the study of the Bible, loves to proclaim the blessed truths of Christian theology, and he has no greater joy than to have his people study and apply the same blessed truths.<sup>29)</sup> He wishes and prays and

28) Walther: "I bow to the humblest member coming with Scripture." "This humble member, bringing God's Word to bear against me, is so far above me as God is above a man." (See *Walther and the Church*, pp. 22, 45.) Kromayer: "We must give a more ready ear to a plain layman when he adduces Scripture than to a whole council which takes a stand contrary to Scripture." (See CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, 1939, p. 594.) Kromayer and Walther express the mind of Luther: "One must believe a layman when he offers clear Scripture . . . more than the Pope or council" (XV:1549). And we have the mind of Luther: "Wenn ein Privatmann die klare Schrift fuer sich hat, dann ist ihm zu folgen, da haelt er das eine Licht vor Augen" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1918, p. 118).

29) Could there be Christian ministers who would deliberately keep their people from acquiring solid theological knowledge? Could it be true what Luther said about conditions of his time? "Sonst, wenn die

labors for this, that "Jerusalem, that bringeth good tidings, lift up her voice with strength."

Blessed be Martin Luther, the restorer of the right of private judgment. J. Clayton says: "To this day Martin Luther is praised for bringing the gift of private judgment in faith and morals to all believers. On the other hand, among the Catholics Luther is held in abhorrence as an apostate monk who drew countless souls into heresy and whole nations into schism." To be sure, the papists execrate Luther. Emperor Charles V was horrified and cried out: "A single monk, led astray by private judgment, has set himself against the faith held by all Christians for a thousand years and more." And the Pope's men hate Luther with an undying hatred for having dethroned their lord as the ruler of Christendom and enthroned the believers as kings and priests. But for this very thing we love Luther and praise the name of the Lord. John Lord thus praises the work of Luther: "Thus was born the second great idea of the Reformation—the supreme authority of the Scriptures, to which Protestants of every denomination have since professed to cling. . . . No, I say, let the Scriptures be put into the hand of everybody; let there be private judgment; let spiritual liberty be revived, as in Apostolic days. . . . Then will the people arise in their power and majesty, and obey God rather than man and defy all sorts of persecution and martyrdom, having a serene faith in those blessed promises which the Gospel unfolds! . . . Thus was born the third great idea of the Reformation—the right of private judgment, religious liberty, call it what you will. It appealed to the mind and heart of Christendom. It gave consolation to the peasantry of Europe; for no family was too poor to possess a Bible, the greatest possible boon and treasure—read and pondered in the evening, after hard labors and bitter insults; read aloud to the family circle, with its inexhaustible store of moral wealth . . . its supernal counsels, its consoling and emancipating truths. . . . The Satanic hatred of this right was the cause of most of the martyrdoms and persecutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It was the declaration of this right which emancipated Europe from the dogmas of the Middle Ages, the thraldom of Rome, and the reign of

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Laien die Schrift laesen, muessten die Pfaffen auch studieren, dass sie nicht gestraft und ueberwunden wuerden" (IX:1236). And what about this statement in *The Christian Century*, Dec. 1, 1943? "The deterioration of Christian intelligence among the laity reflects an aversion to theology which exists among the clergy. . . . The deterioration of Christian intelligence among the laity reacts upon the preacher to lower the dignity of his message. He would not resort to these trivialities and irrelevancies if he were preaching to a congregation in, let us say, Scotland, where some vestige of the old-time Christian intelligence among the laity still survives. . . ."

priests. Why should not Protestants of every shade cherish and defend this sacred right?" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 235, 239, 241, 243.) In a sermon on the restoration of Christian liberty through the Reformation, based on 1 Cor. 3:21-23, Dr. Walther said: "Christ says to His Christians: 'One is your Master, One is your Father,' but the Pope said: 'I am your master and your pope, that is, the father of all Christians.' Paul says to the Christians: 'Not that we have dominion over your faith; I speak not by commandment,' and Peter warns all ministers of the Church: 'Neither as being lords over God's heritage'; but the language the Pope, bishops, and priests use with the Christians is: We will, order, and command; and what we order you to do and believe, you must do and believe; if you refuse, you will be banned and die under the curse of God as heretics. . . . Then came Luther. He had discovered the meaning of a glorious truth of Scripture; it had revived his despairing soul; and with a loud and glad voice he proclaimed it to stricken Christendom: 'All things are yours'. . . . 'All things are yours' who believe! That was the proclamation putting men into possession of all the blessings of salvation gained by Christ and filling the hearts of millions of doubting and despairing souls with the consolation and hope of eternal life. And it did something else. By means of the article: 'All things are yours' who believe! Luther restored the whole body of the evangelical doctrine to the Church. The word: 'All things are yours,' who believe! was the sun in the light of which the mystery of iniquity, hidden for long centuries, stood revealed and naked before the eyes of all who would see. This was the stone from David's sling which felled the monster who had for so long insulted Israel of the New Testament, ended his tryannical rule over the hearts, souls, and consciences of the Christians, and restored to them their Christian liberty. 'All things are yours,' who believe! That was God's thunder clap, at which the priests who had been barring the way to the paradise of grace, who had thrust themselves between Christ and the Christians, fled in dismay and terror. 'All things are yours,' who believe! Emblazoned on the banner floating above our Evangelical Church is the glorious legend: 'All things are yours!" (*Lutherische Brosamen*, pp. 595, 598.)

Blessed are we if we jealously guard the right of private judgment and exercise it to the full. Let us heed Walther's exhortation: "But to you, my dear brethren and sisters in the faith, I say: Know what you possess in Christ; and if it were possible that we, your pastors, should betray our trust as custodians of this great treasure, do you boldly make use of your dearly bought privileges; let the earth burst asunder, let the hierarchs raise a hue and cry against you — it is and will remain true for all

times and must be preached to all true believers: 'All things are yours; and ye are Christ's.' Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage! Amen." (*Loc. cit.*) Let us follow the example of Luther, who would not permit any man to rule over his conscience, but did make Christ its absolute ruler. "In his very last sermon the great champion of private judgment and liberty of conscience declared once more (XII:1260 ff.): 'I grant that the emperor, king, pope, cardinal, princes, and lords are prudent and wise; but I will believe on my Lord Christ alone: He is my Master and Lord, whom God has bidden me to hear and to learn of Him what is true, divine wisdom. . . . Therefore, dear Pope, your claim to sit in Christendom as lord and to have authority to decide what I should believe and do, that I cannot accept. For here is the Lord whom alone we should hear in these matters. . . . This, and much more, might be said on this Gospel, but I am too feeble; let this suffice. God give us grace that we receive His precious Word with thanksgiving and increase and grow in the knowledge and faith of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and continue steadfast in the confession of His holy Word unto the end, Amen!" (*Theological Quarterly*, 1911, p. 254.)

(To be continued)

TH. ENGELDER

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### Nathan Soederblom

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#### I

Lars Olof Jonathan (Nathan) Soederblom was born in the parish of Troenoe, Sweden, January 15, 1866, the son of Rector Joseph Soederblom and his wife. He received the degree of Candidate of Philosophy at the University of Uppsala in 1886 and the degree of Candidate of Theology in 1892. He was appointed pastor of the Swedish church in Paris in 1894 and also seamen's pastor at Dunkerque, Calais, and Boulogne. While in Paris, he pursued his studies and graduated from the *École des hautes études*, in the section of the science of religion, in 1898, receiving the degree of Doctor of Theology from the University of Paris in 1901. The same year he was called to the chair of comparative religion in the University of Uppsala. In 1914 he was made Archbishop of Sweden.

The honorary degree of Doctor of Theology was conferred upon him by Geneva, Oslo, St. Andrews, Glasgow, and Greifswald, the honorary Doctor of Philosophy by the universities of Uppsala, Greifswald, Bonn. Other honorary degrees he received from Berlin and Oxford.

In the work *When the Hours Course and Change*, 1909, there

is in one essay a most remarkable passage which must be auto-biographical and where Soederblom apparently is giving an insight into what might be called his conversion. First the work of the Gospel came, breaking in on his purely intellectual state of total skepticism and darkening of the light when the old doctrines he had learned were lost to his convictions. Then he continues to set forth how one day the dazzling and amazing demolition from the knowledge that God is holy and righteous fell, lightninglike, upon him.

One is apt to agree with one of the keenest critics of Soederblom's religious position, the late Professor Adolph Hult of Rock Island Seminary, that this biographical self-analysis, where the Gospel precedes the Law in its work on the soul—saved first by the Gospel and then by the Law, discovering the threatening and dire demand of the Law—accounts for the unspeakable confusion of spiritual judgment that makes the writings of Soederblom as a Liberal "so disheartening in their jumbled brilliancy and their maze of winsome and repellent elements."

One might find a symbol of the soul of the Swedish archbishop in two recollections which we have of his visit to the United States in 1923. For one thing, he delivered 130 lectures at eleven universities, which received him as the most distinguished Protestant representative of modern thought. But with him he carried in a leather plush-lined case a bishop's crozier seven hundred years old, which he bore as he walked in procession at the church meetings which welcomed him as the Augustana Synod's visitor from the "Mother Church." Probably there has not been among the church leaders of the last fifty years a figure which united such discordant elements of deep sentimental regard for the inheritance which has come down to us from the Apostolic Church and the sponsorship of destructive Biblical criticism of the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, of which Soederblom, Ernst Troeltsch, and Bousset were the banner bearers. Accordingly, as one side and the other of his spirit impressed those who came into contact with him, he was regarded on the one hand as a champion of ancient truth and, on the other, as a leader in the naturalistic criticism of religion.

He was born of devout Christian parents. His father was a pastor of distinguished ability, who regarded his highest calling to be the preaching of the Gospel. Soederblom tells us that as he grew up through childhood and adolescence to manhood, he learned to love the church in which he had been baptized and confirmed because the constant answer to his inquiries into the source of the many peculiar blessings which he enjoyed in this church was always: Martin Luther and the Reformation. The

hymns were his delight. He asked his mother, "Who gave us these hymns?" and the answer was, "Martin Luther and the Reformation." He was interested in the Bible and read it with growing love and devotion, and when he asked, "Whence this Bible?" the answer was: "In our language through Martin Luther and the Reformation." When upon the high festivals the liturgical service of the church uplifted his soul and he inquired from whom they had received these forms of worship, he was told, "From Martin Luther." He tells us that his mother was his first teacher, and he adds this compliment, that she was the best teacher he ever had. He relates that he memorized Martin Luther's Small Catechism and never lost the thrill which he felt when he repeated Martin Luther's wonderful explanation of the Second Article.

Years later, when he was primate of Sweden, the leading figure of the Second Lutheran World Convention, held at Copenhagen, Denmark, 1929, he closed the meeting at which he had presented the greetings of His Majesty, King Gustavus of Sweden, by reading a scholarly paper on the subject: "Luther as a Christian Personality and His Significance for Northern Europe." Here are a few excerpts:

"Luther takes up the classical documents of elementary instruction. His Little Catechism continues what the Ancient Church and the Middle Ages had taught and done. Luther was come not to break up but to fulfill — obedient to the Master. His piety as well as his psychological grip are shown by the fact that Luther bases his teaching on the main items of the faith which had of yore been taught by the Church, *viz.*, the Ten Commandments, from Moses' time, the Lord's Prayer, which Jesus gave to His disciples, and the summary of the Ancient Church of its faith in Father, Son, and Spirit. He kept to the classical tradition of the Church. An inevitable objectivity determined him. Was Christianity to be stated in terms, the starting point must be sought in its most widespread and time-honored documents. The same rule must be observed this very day."

In conclusion Soederblom said:

"May the Word live and work among us; God's Word and promises shall stand fast. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. . . . Shall we not, in our different languages, confess our faith in our Lord together, using Luther's words?"

All arising, led by the Archbishop, then confessed:

"I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord; etc."

A Fundamentalist magazine, *Christian Faith and Life* (Oc-

tober, 1931, p. 543), continuation of the *Bible Champion*, broke a lance for the orthodoxy of Dr. Soederblom in such terms as these: "There have arisen voices who claim him as a Liberal, who awaken the impression that he had broken with the historic Christianity of Holy Scriptures, that he was an outstanding leader of the Modernists, true, not radical, but one of them. That is false—it is a glaring misrepresentation. It manifests either a deliberate attempt to distort the facts, or it is, as is so often the case, a superficial understanding of a great and devout faith." In support of this judgment *Christian Faith and Life* quotes extracts from the remarks addressed by Soederblom to the first Lutheran World Convention (1923):

"With profound gratitude in our hearts we lift our voices in praise to God for His grace in sending the prophet Martin Luther to reveal to us again the atoning work of His Son. . . . Luther is the greatest evangelist the Church of Christ has known since New Testament times. . . . Luther's doctrine of faith is often interpreted as a strong psychological effect which a man produces in himself. This is utterly false. Luther himself wrote in his first exposition of the Lord's Prayer: 'Proud-spirited saints do more harm than any other people on earth, etc.' We are nothing. We are poor, weak vessels with impure content or at best with no content at all. But the empty hand of trust is filled by God's mercy in Christ Jesus. . . . Luther's special mission lay in the fact that he revealed again, as no other since the days of St. Paul had done, the boundless depths of the love of God in the Crucified One. And this evangelical doctrine of the salvation alone through the grace of God it is our mission to keep forever pure and whole. Nothing else can assure us of eternal life. . . .

"So therefore we gather under the name of Luther but by no means in the name of Luther. Rather do we gather in the Name of Jesus Christ. The Word of God is our only strength. No worldly means nor human calculations will suffice. The Word that Luther brought to light again, the Word of Revelation, above all, the Word become flesh, the incarnated Logos,—this is our sufficiency. By the grace of God we should also incarnate that Word in our hearts and lives, because that Word is the Will of God."

On the same occasion Archbishop Soederblom gave his hearty "yea" to this article of faith: "The Lutheran World Convention acknowledges the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the only source and the infallible norm of all church doctrine and practice, and sees in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, especially in the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism, a pure exposition of the Word of God."

It is necessary that we quote such expressions as these, uttered

or publicly acknowledged by Nathan Soederblom, in order to account for the acclaim with which he was received in the United States by many Lutherans, particularly by the officials, theologians, and parish clergy of the Augustana Synod on his visit to this country. Dr. Hult<sup>1)</sup> records the unequivocal statement of a Lutheran official paper that Soederblom is "the Lutheran theologian who *freely* but *firmly* [italics by the original writer of the editorial] moves within the limits drawn up by the Word and the Confessional writings." I had occasion soon after to interrogate one of the Augustana Synod editors regarding the honors which his Church had shown a man whose theological position I had learned to regard even more radical than that of Adolph Harnack. I pointed out that he had not so long ago contributed an article to an Episcopalian paper, *The Churchman*, in which he denied the propriety of using the Psalms and Old Testament examples of praying for victory in time of war, since the Jehovah of the Old Testament differed in degree but not in kind from the tribal deities of other Semitic nations. The answer I received was: "The trouble is, when Soederblom writes as a philosopher, one must read him as a philosopher and not forget what he writes as a theologian." The view still prevails also outside the Augustana Synod that Soederblom's religious speculations have been misunderstood, that in his rich, poetical mind there welled up a wealth of symbols to express the inexpressible and to dress in modern scientific terms the ancient faith of Christendom, and that at heart he was a simple Lutheran Christian. We also heard the note sounded occasionally, while Soederblom was still living, that the Lutheran Church should be proud of possessing the greatest Protestant leader of the age. It is, therefore, not out of place that in the series now running in the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY a chapter be devoted to a brief analysis of Soederblom's religious position.

## II

Nathan Soederblom was one of the leading representatives of a group of religionists called the "History (or Science) of Religion School." The representatives of this school of thought hold that religion is a product of natural evolution, which has attained its highest developments, so far, in Christianity. As already noted, he was associated both in thought and literary activity with Ernst Troeltsch of Berlin. So far as scholastic attainments are concerned, Troeltsch was the giant, his scholarship by far richer and more profound than that of his brilliant Swedish friend. You will find little in his writings, however, that will compare with Soederblom's aesthetic evaluation of Christianity and of ancient dogma, none of

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1) *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, 1916, p. 468.

that enthusiastic delight in the Lutheran Church as a Church, none of that eager quest for the spiritual freshening of the Church's life, as he understood it. Yet Dr. Troeltsch, like Professor Harnack, recognized the complete religious solidarity between himself and the Swedish archbishop. He praised Soederblom for eliminating the distinction of "pagan" and "Christian" from the study of religions.

Fundamental to the entire scheme is the conception that the Old Testament religion like all others has developed out of animism (spirit worship). In general, the pan-Babylonian view is held, which makes the religion of the Old Testament a late development out of ancient Babylonian mythology. Basic is also the assumption that the tendency towards the recognition of one Supreme Power in the world is manifested at a comparatively early stage in the development of man. The broad distinctions are made between the religions of savages, the religions of primitive culture, the religions of advanced culture, and finally, to follow the classification of Morris Jastrow,<sup>2)</sup> "the religions which emphasize as an ideal the co-extensiveness of religion with life and which aim at a consistent accord between religious doctrine and religious practice." This is understood to be not simply a classification but stages of development through which all the higher religions have passed. From Wellhausen and Kuennen down, the Old Testament is interpreted as offering a conception of Jehovah not inconsistent with the supposition that there are other gods, albeit inferior ones and unworthy of notice. These are the fundamentals of the History of Religion School. They cut away the very ground from our faith. All religion certainly disappears if what we have in the Bible is merely a product of evolution.

In his *Origin of the Idea of God* (Preface) we are prepared for Soederblom's evolutionistic study of his theme thus: "No one can give an account of the origin of the God-faith. The super-human, Divine origin of religion is not accessible to research. And its earliest appearance on our earth lies beyond the oldest testimonies. We were not along." Then he traces through 340 of 390 pages, in truly evolutionistic manner, "the primitive beginnings, to which a God-conception in the proper sense with consequent worship has attached itself." The lowest form of animistic and like religions of the wild tribes of the earth are studied, and he says of them: "Even if a God-faith in the proper, customary sense has not been found, it does not follow therefrom that man then lacked religion" (p. 207). There is no mention of true religion in the Bible before the patriarchs.

The fundamental rejection of the Christian concept of revela-

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2) *The Study of Religion*, p.117.

tion runs through all the *religionsgeschichtliche* papers and books of Soederblom. "For us the whole cycle of the church year is filled with the life of Jesus and its continuation in the work of the Spirit. . . . But the revelation is not finished. The Father worketh until now."<sup>3)</sup> In the rather confused and vague, but, as R. Seeberg<sup>4)</sup> says, "ueberaus anregenden Ausfuehrungen von N. Soederblom," *Vater, Sohn und Geist* (1909, pp. 70—72), we have the same presentation of continued revelation: "Jeder, der mehr oder weniger bewusst, aber doch wesentlich von Christus abhaengig, sich zur Gottesgewissheit durcharbeitet, zu innerer Be-freiung und Erneuerung des Lebens, erwirbt sich gleichzeitig einen Platz in der Geschichte der Offenbarung." The New Testament came under the judgment of the same destructive criticism. "We know that Jesus Christ Himself — who in His personality is recognized by faith as God's speaking work to men — He, too, was a child of His time, although He rises heavens-high above the ages. He thought like his contemporaries concerning the form of the earth and the course of the sun. Like them, he related certain forms of insanity to evil spirits, that made men demonical."<sup>5)</sup> In the opinion of Troeltsch, Soederblom's writing have contributed largely to the wiping out of the line of distinction between natural and revealed religion.

### III

The study of the Comparative Science of Religion tends to relativize Christianity in the minds of all whose spiritual experience has been defective, either by lack of Christian training or by too prominent an intellectual disposition. In the following we shall trace the effect of Soederblom's preoccupation with *vergleichende Religionskunde* upon his career as a churchman and a theologian.

In a letter, of which I have the original before me, addressed by Archbishop Soederblom to certain Hindu Christians in 1922, the practical working out of the confessional indifference of the Swedish primate is plainly revealed. The Church of Sweden had taken over certain missions formerly conducted by German Lutherans. When the natives were informed of the fact that the Swedish Church had entered into altar and pulpit fellowship with the Anglicans (Church of England), they asked, "How can this be?" Replying to a letter of protest from Hindu laymen, Soederblom defended this change of Lutheran policy, made under his administration. In this letter he expressed views regarding the Lord's Supper and other doctrines which later caused these native

3) *The Individual and the Church*, 1909, p. 17.

4) *Der Ursprung des Christusglaubens*, 1914, p. 62.

5) *The Young Augustine*, 1916, p. 21.

Christians to organize a separate body. In 1923 they joined the Missouri Synod group of congregations in India.

Summing up the activities of Dr. Soederblom until 1924, Dr. Reu said, "He has given evidence of an absolutely morbid tendency for uniting the churches."

Soederblom was not really in America as a guest of Augustana, in 1923, but came under the auspices of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship Through the Churches, of which he was first vice-president. This alliance was then (as it is now) federated with a Church Peace Council completely under radical control and was then working with two million dollars of Carnegie money. In the announcement of his addresses it was distinctly stated that their purpose was to bring about union between the churches, and Soederblom's achievement of establishing fraternal relationships of the State Church of England and that of Sweden was particularly stressed in the announcements of the World Alliance. At a number of American universities Soederblom lectured on the subject "Luther, Erasmus, Loyola." A typical passage is the following: "We now see that Luther was quite as authentic a continuation of the deep religious life of the Middle Ages as Erasmus or Loyola. Erasmus best deserves the name of reformer. He wanted reform. He wished to remove a lot of weeds from life, worship, and doctrine. Luther and Loyola were impelled by a deeper pathos, an all-consuming desire for peace of soul. They found it in different ways, and each in his way forms an original religious type. It may be disputed which is the straighter way, that which continues through Luther or that which continues through Ignatius Loyola and Tridentinum."

In spite of his veneration for the Apostolicum and Luther's Catechism, creedal statements were *lightly* esteemed by Soederblom. "We must not attach too much weight to formulas, however important they may be. The work of the Spirit goes on continually in the Church, and that work of the Spirit acknowledges no confessional boundaries." As for the road to Christian union, he expected little from doctrinal discussion. His essays and addresses are singularly free from any attempt to mediate between the doctrinal positions of the historic Christian denominations. He advocated in a most outspoken manner those avenues toward union which would circumvent all doctrinal differences and by ignoring them lead the church into active collaboration on the basis of full Christian fellowship. "This path is called Christian co-operation. This method is fundamentally practical, not theoretical. All sincere disciples can join in it. Even those who cherish the hope of absorbing all fellow Christians in their own flock can center with us upon the path of love without any prejudice to their principles.

. . . For Christian co-operation it has often been made a rule—either understood or clearly expressed—to ascertain uniformity of creed before the members of Christ's Church can agree to work wholeheartedly together in His name. Leave to each communion entire freedom to regulate its own faith and its own affairs. Is not our sincere yearning to follow the Lord enough? Is it necessary to go into the question of our different creeds, views, and customs when the great thing in common really exists in our hearts, namely, obedience to the voice of our Lord? Our own work in His service as well as the distress of our generation renders systematic co-operation imperative."<sup>6)</sup> In 1930 Archbishop Soederblom was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts in promoting international friendship through the churches.

Naturally, sympathies as wide as those documented in these brief extracts, which are typical, would not stop at acknowledging religious fellowship with those who had broken completely with the concept of evangelical orthodoxy and with declared enemies of the Christian system of doctrine. When the ultraradical Modernist Loisy was to be honored on his seventieth birthday, it was Soederblom who represented the Scandinavian Lutherans on the committee. He, as well as Harnack, was willing to honor a man who had been excommunicated by the Roman Catholic Church on account of his rejection of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity and who was then issuing one book after the other teeming with blasphemous heresies.

Dr. W. H. T. Dau has analyzed<sup>7)</sup> the relationship between Soederblom and Harnack in connection with the visit of the German theologian to the principal ecclesiastical and academic centers of Sweden in 1923. He quotes a conservative editor who voiced in *Nya Vaektaren* his disgust at the manner in which the primate of the Swedish Church conducted himself, at a recent synodical convention, as "bishop of the whole world," who, like the Pope, devotes himself to world politics. This endorsement of religious radicalism, of course, stems directly out of the archbishop's identification with the History of Religion School. He had written in one of his earlier essays: "Ideell gesehen, kann man zu den Zeugen des inneren Lebens, die zusammen gehoeren und sich zu einer objektiven Macht sammeln, auch solche ausserhalb der biblischen Religionslinie stehende Persoenlichkeiten rechnen, die auf hoeherem oder niederm Stadium eine gleichbedeutende Gotteserfahrung erlebt haben, besonders Sokrates."<sup>8)</sup> Dr. Hult expressed

6) *Christian Fellowship or the United Life and Work of Christendom*, 1924, p. 155.

7) *Theological Monthly*, 1923, p. 225 ff.

8) *Vater, Sohn und Geist*, 1909, p. 71.

himself as "appalled by the Socinian breakdown of the atonement doctrine in *The Religious Problem*, 1910, pp. 425 ff. and on. The whole chapter pits the hopeless 'retribution doctrine' of, as he says, Brahmanism and Moses and Paul and later Christian thought against the 'deeper-lying law for God's line of conduct, election and faithfulness, grace and forgiveness, suffering and atonement.'"

There is but a difference of rank and degree, but not of kind, between Socrates and Jesus viewed as channels of divine revelation. "History and revelation show us how Christ, God's supreme Son, the real Revealer, suffers and dies. Dogmatics that are more well-meaning and eager than Biblical and sound have emphasized the divinity of Christ in a metaphysical way which incurs the risk of crucifying God the Father and of transforming Golgotha and Jesus' cry of anguish 'Eli, Eli' to a sort of sham maneuver in divinity. The Christian Church has always rejected the conclusion from the dogma of the divinity of Christ that God Himself, the one, sole Almighty, suffers."<sup>9)</sup> Christ was not essentially God but with Him "a divine ferment entered into our species akin to the image of God that is latent and deformed in mankind."

Two lectures were published 1921 by Hinrichs in Leipzig. The first: *Gehen wir einer religioesen Erneuerung entgegen?* The second: *Der Kirche Christi Weg in dieser Zeit*. These essays very well illustrate on the one hand the moral earnestness, the enthusiasm for good causes which characterized Soederblom, and also his dubious religious position, which never fails to move into the liberal field and finds its explanation there. For instance:

"I know of no evangelical theologian of the better kind, beginning with Martin Luther himself, who would consider the doctrine of the two natures and three persons and everything pertaining to these as perfectly expressing the Savior's personality and His witness concerning Himself and the Father." To which we would add that to reject a mystery and to regard it as too profound for our understanding are certainly two very different things.

In the second of these essays Soederblom maintains that it is God the Father who suffers and that Christ is not essentially the eternal Son of God but only the Revealer of God. He approaches pretty close to the vulgar Rationalism of the eighteenth century when he draws a parallel between the Virgin Birth and the claims for a miraculous conception which have been made for Buddha, Pythagoras, Plato, and the Pharaohs of Egypt. "The heart of the idea is that such a person was regarded as a product of deity and furnished with divine powers." Concerning the Incarnation, he has this significant interpretation: "It is a fundamental

9) *Christian Fellowship*, etc., p. 146.

belief of Christianity that the appearance of Jesus is a miracle, that the Word, the Logos, God's Purpose, became flesh in Him." Not God, but the divine purpose, then, became flesh in Christ.

The idea of a vicarious satisfaction for sin as taught by the Church is definitely rejected in this essay as in others. The author terms it an "easy exchange between the sufferer and the human soul." The entire discussion is based on the notion not of some objective result of Christ's suffering and death, but as a revelation of something that had previously existed but not recognized by men in its fullness—the love of God for mankind. Christ is represented as at the height of his office as Revealer in His suffering and dying.

Regarding the resurrection of Christ, the most that Soederblom is ready to concede is the genuineness of the Gospel narratives as a record of convictions held by the Evangelists, namely, that the same body that was laid in the grave came forth again. But as for an actual restoration of the crucified body of Jesus to physical life, Soederblom quotes 1 Cor. 15 as denying any such conception. There is here simply a spiritual "resurrection," hardly more than a continued influence of the personality of Jesus.

Dr. Reu closes an analysis of *Der Kirche Christi Weg in dieser Zeit* as follows: "Also we confess with Paul and Luther that Jesus Christ has become our Lord, in order that we may be His own and live under Him and serve Him in His kingdom. But we accept Christ as true God, born of the Father from eternity, and true man, born of the Virgin Mary, and that He has become our Lord only because He has redeemed us through suffering, death, and bodily resurrection from the powers of sin, of death, and of the devil. Of all this, Soederblom knows nothing, however much he speaks of grace, forgiveness, surrender to God, and fellowship with Him."

In the *Theological Monthly* of August, 1923, Professor Dau, under the caption "Soederblom and Harnack in a Swedish Estimate," reported that on the visit of the German radical to Sweden, Soederblom heralded him as "the greatest theologian of our time." In the same article Professor Dau quoted a conservative Swedish paper as saying that when a religious radical becomes archbishop, he is not thereby converted from error, but at best becomes "a little more critical about his speech"; also, that in spite of a storm of protest from good Lutherans in Sweden, Soederblom lent official influence to the appointment of Professor Wetter, a modern Sadducean, to the theological faculty at Uppsala. This Professor Wetter, according to a statement in the *Lutheran Companion*, organ of the Augustana Synod, looks upon the New Testament as a pious fraud, the result of autosuggestion. On the other hand, we note

that when the defender of Lutheran orthodoxy in Norway, Dr. Hallesby, was in Uppsala, he was denied the pulpit in Soederblom's church.<sup>10)</sup>

A symposium of essays by various Swedish authors was published in 1924, which took the extreme radical position regarding such doctrines as that of the Trinity, of Christ's divinity, His resurrection and ascension, and the belief in the existence of a devil and a hell. It is in his introduction to this book of essays that the archbishop used the words, since often quoted: "We cast off the mask and now see each other face to face."<sup>11)</sup>

#### IV

In 1922 full religious fellowship was established between the Swedish Lutheran Church and the Established Church of England. It was fresh from this achievement that Soederblom made his visit to the United States, referred to earlier in this essay. He was, upon his arrival, tendered a special reception by Lutherans of many connections. The rest of his visit was something of a triumphal march from Harvard to Rock Island. Receptions, banquets, festival services crowded his program. He took part in the dedication of the new Augustana College and Seminary buildings at Rock Island and was received as an honored guest at many American universities.

When he began to lecture and to speak, American Lutherans first withheld judgment, thinking that their ears were deceiving them. Then, as the truth broke upon them, they indignantly protested against the Liberalism of the Swedish primate. The organ of the Norwegian Lutheran Church quoted "My kingdom is not of this world" against Soederblom's scheme of establishing "a super-church organization for the political salvation of the world," and his teaching was condemned as "leading men into the mush of modern rationalism." He was called "a theological tight-rope walker," an "evasive, indefinite modernist." Ohio Synod papers called him the "greatest errorist among Lutherans," who is "introducing into the American Lutheran Church through the Augustana Synod that radicalism which is destroying Christianity in the sects." "The Swede Gustavus Adolphus once saved Lutheranism; shall American Lutheranism be destroyed by a radical Swede?" *The Kirchliche Zeitschrift* of the Iowa Synod (Vol. 40, No. 10) brought an article which, with all necessary detail, proved that Soederblom's religion is a pantheism; is based on evolution; denies the Atonement; recognizes as Christians men like Monod,

10) *Lutheran Witness*, 1923, p. 340.

11) *Lutheran Witness*, 1924, p. 217.

who denied God's omnipotence; and calls Jesus "a child of his time" because he believed in evil spirits.

Dr. M. Reu's comment was:<sup>12)</sup> "A richly endowed, vital personality, overflowing with love and possessing definite moral convictions. . . . A strongly magnetic personality which made a deep impression. . . . Wherever he was not well known, his thoroughly liberal position was not recognized because of the conservative and positive ring of his speech. But the Church of God has been injured rather than strengthened by his visit. Many a one, at least temporarily, has had his clear sensitiveness for truth and error made unresponsive, and others have been led into modes of thought and types of action foreign to sound Lutheranism." . . . "We know out of our own experience what attraction there resides in linguistic and racial fellowship. But wherever the convictions and the Word of God are concerned, another stronger tendency must meet such influences and gain the victory." On the other hand, his lack of definiteness offended many. The *Lutheran* (U. L. C. A.) said concerning one of Soederblom's addresses: "What we miss throughout the entire discussion is the confessional consciousness that characterized the great leaders and teachers of the Lutheran Church and made them pre-eminently witness-bearers to the Truth which they confessed. They believed with a warmth and with a definiteness and depth of conviction that was as sincere as it was unyielding. They prized their faith above rubies. Whoever did violence to their faith did violence to them. They had the courage to say to an opposing world, 'Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise!' They cared little what men might think or say, but much what God thought or said. They were wedded by an indissoluble bond to the Word. That, and that alone, was permitted to settle all controversy."

Among Swedish Americans, voices were raised against the religious views of Soederblom when his alignment with the Science of Religion School had first become evident. When he was elected archbishop, the venerable Dr. Norelius wrote: "I am severely opposed to all entangling alliances with the State Church of Sweden, not because I believe that there are no Christians and no orthodox Lutherans in the Church of Sweden, but because the church people are not allowed to govern that Church according to her laws and regulations and because the state powers govern the Church arbitrarily and do so in opposition to the well-known desires and vote of the Church. Do we need a plainer illustration of this fact than the latest appointment of an archbishop? The majority of the church people have expressed their deep sorrow over this arbitrary act of the state powers. How will this majority

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12) *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, 1924, p. 137 ff.

of the honest Lutherans of Sweden feel, and what will they think of the Augustana Synod, a free Lutheran Church of America, which sends a representative to Uppsala with congratulations upon what has taken place? If that is not an entangling alliance with the State Church, I do not know what is."<sup>13)</sup>

The late Adolph Hult, in his correspondence with the author of this essay and in contributions to Lutheran magazines outside the Augustana Synod, had long expressed his grief over the influence which emanated from Soederblom upon the Lutheran Church in America. He contributed to the *Bible Banner* (St. Paul) for January, 1924, an article entitled "Soederblom as a Temptation to the Augustana Synod."<sup>14)</sup> In this essay Dr. Hult says: "Hallesby, Soederblom's mightiest opponent in the Scandinavian lands, said during his visit that he deemed Soederblom the most dangerous man in the Lutheran Church. I told Dr. Hallesby personally that for years this has been my own conviction. He is most dangerous because he is the most skillful evader of the issue in all Protestantism." Hult contributed to *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* in 1916 an article entitled "Soederblom and Troeltsch," from which we shall quote a few paragraphs in closing. Dr. Hult wrote:

"In his charming, beautiful, and soul-ravishing language and thought-tone he ceaselessly wounds the fundamental articles of our Christian faith and Biblical doctrine. Troeltsch, the out and out liberal, will not play havoc with the Confessional status as will the man who leads his Church with sincerity, yet without possessing her faith and doctrine nor the Biblical and Lutheran simplicity which commends itself to the Lutheran conscience. Troeltsch and Soederblom are in teachings liberal, but the latter is as churchly as Troeltsch is unchurchly, as practical in religious work as Troeltsch is impractical." "Modernism and rationalism, in the case of Soederblom, come together with a most lovely and winning religious personality. This makes what a leading English Lutheran editor once called 'the blandishments of Soederblom's personality' all the more captious, unless the eye be single to the truth of the Word alone, not to ecclesiastical fellowship considerations and personal impressions and relations of personal friendship. All the

13) From the Lutheran Church of Europe the available sources reveal only one protest against the leadership of Soederblom in Lutheran affairs. When the Cathedral of Abo, Finland, was celebrating its seven-hundredth anniversary, a program was arranged, to which it was proposed to invite Nathan Soederblom as the speaker. The Rt. Rev. Gustav Johannsson, the eighty-five-year-old archbishop of Finland, however, entered a vigorous protest, pointing out that "Finland's Christian people, when they celebrate the festival of their cathedral, will not wish to see in their midst a person who denies the bodily resurrection of Christ."

14) Reprinted in *Theological Monthly*, 1924, p. 79.

Confessional consciousness of the mighty Lutheran Church of America reacts with solemn earnestness against this unbiblical and un-Lutheran theology. It is the better part of wisdom to become conscious of the eminent and imminent danger to the integral Lutheran consciousness of America which any dallying with this type of theological thought would expose us to. It is too late for the Lutheran Church of America, which by the grace of God has been permitted to weather the storm of Reformed rationalism raging about our Church in this country for a whole generation, now to import a belated form of rationalism, an anachronism church-historically. We want God's pure word. We will have nothing else. And there is no personality so loftily placed that, God granting His grace, shall be able to woo us away from 'Gottes Wort und Luthers Lehr'. In the awful world-collapse and world-crash, we have no time for anything but to seek the whole saving truth of the inviolate Holy Scriptures." —

The death of Nathan Soederblom was reported from Sweden, July 12, 1931. Addressing the Lutheran Academy at Dubuque in 1940, Dr. O. Evjen quoted these as the last words of the dying archbishop: "Nu har vi evighed" — "And now, eternity." We shall think of him, in that hour, as turning to "the boundless depths of the love of God in the Crucified One," confessed by him at Eisenach (as quoted earlier in our essay), and, realizing that "we are poor, we are nothing," experiencing "the empty hand of trust filled by God's mercy in Christ Jesus."

THEODORE GRAEBNER

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## Outlines on the Standard Gospels

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### Rogate

John 16:23-30

Rogate! Pray! World-wide trouble gives added significance and emphasis to this Sunday's call to prayer. Is. 26:16. Many have been brought to their knees who had perhaps never prayed before or had long neglected prayer.

But only prayer in Jesus' name is acceptable to God and will avail. What Jesus says in the Gospel for this Sunday concerning prayer in His name is of vital interest.

### Prayer in Jesus' Name

1. *Such a prayer can be made only with a true knowledge of Jesus*
2. *Such a prayer is acceptable to God and heard*

## A. Text.

1

a. Jesus enjoins upon His disciples to pray in His name. V. 23. Up to that time they had not asked in His name. V. 24. Why? They had lacked a full and complete knowledge of Him. His sayings to them had been "proverbs," dark sayings. Their hope in Jesus was still mixed with carnal expectations. This imperfect knowledge was reflected in their prayers. Matt. 20:20-23.

b. Jesus promised, however, that the day should come when they should ask in His name. "That day" is the time when the Holy Spirit should be poured out upon them. The promise of the Spirit is the outstanding topic of Christ's farewell discourse, of which our text is a closing part. John 14-16. Enlightened by the Holy Spirit, the disciples should then have a full and living knowledge of Jesus, both of His person and His redemptive work. They should know then that He came forth from the Father and came into the world and, again, that He should leave the world and go to the Father. V. 28. This verse sums up all of Jesus' personal life and work. With this knowledge of Christ, bestowed by the Spirit, they would ask in His name, basing all their pleas to the Father wholly and solely upon what Christ had done for them and, of course, asking according to the will of Christ, only what would tend to the glory of God, their own and their neighbor's true welfare.

B. Application: The day of Pentecost has come. The blessed work of the Spirit goes on. To the end of time the Spirit enlightens us to know our Savior and to love Him aright. Only with such knowledge can and will Christians pray the Father in Jesus' name. Humbly they will confess that because of their sins they are worthy of none of the things for which they pray. Cf. Luther's explanation of the Fifth Petition. They will base all their pleas upon what Jesus has done for them.

2

A. Jesus assures His disciples that through Him they have free and direct access to the Father and are no longer in need of intercession, not even His own, with respect to their prayer. Vv. 26, 27. Through Christ they have been made children of God. Gal. 4:4, 5. Believing in Him and loving Him, they have entered into that relationship. For Jesus' sake God forgives them all their sins and dearly loves them. Ps. 103:13.—(V. 26b not in conflict with 1 John 2:1, 2. The priestly intercession of Christ retains for us the Father's forgiving grace, which He has gained for us by His vicarious and atoning life and death. Because now through Christ we possess the Father's love, we have free and immediate access to the Throne of Grace.—Least of all are we in need of the intercession of dead saints!)

B. In holy earnestness ("verily, verily") Jesus assures His disciples that their prayer in His name is heard. V. 23.—This promise, added to His express command, v. 24, assures the hearing of prayer in His name. It cannot be otherwise. Christ's merit has infinite weight and value with the Father. Prayers based upon this are sure to be heard.

C. The very promise of Jesus awakened in the hearts of the disciples some of the joy and comfort of successful prayer that was to be theirs in a full measure after Pentecost. V. 24b. Already the clouds of imperfect knowledge seemed to be lifting, and happily they exclaim: Vv. 29, 30. After the enlightenment of Pentecost they experienced the full joy of prayer in Jesus' name.

May we in living knowledge of the Savior experience the comfort and the joy of Christian prayer in these trying days! "Lord, teach us to pray!"

AUG. F. BERNTHAL

### Ascension Day

**Mark 16:14-20**

The ascension of our Lord is a joyful event. David already rejoiced in it, Ps. 47:5-7; 68:18, 19. Much more should New Testament Christians hail with gladness the memorial day of our Savior's glorious ascent.

#### The Ascension of Christ a Joyful Event

1. Because it is the crowning act of our redemption
2. Because thereby our Savior has come nigh to us

#### 1

For Christ His ascension was the solemn assumption of the throne at His Father's right hand, v. 19; 1 Pet. 3:22. He returned to the glory which was His before the world began. It was also the final triumph over all His enemies, Ps. 110; Eph. 1:20-22. For our redemption Jesus had entered into a conflict with the powers of darkness. He had conquered them, and the Father had acknowledged His victory by raising Him from the dead. Now there lacked yet that the mighty Victor celebrate His victory and receive the prize of conquest. 1 Cor. 9:24. That was accomplished by His ascension. Now the promise of the Second Psalm is fulfilled: "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." God has given Him a name above every name. Phil. 2:9-11.

The triumph of the ascending Lord interests us. The enemies with whom He wrestled—sin, Satan, death, and hell—are our enemies. Therefore we partake of His victory. If we now doubt that the forces of evil lie prostrate at our feet, we must deny Jesus' ascension or that He ascended as our Substitute. This crowning act of our redemption seals our victory over the powers of hell.

Christ's ascension is also the reopening of heaven for all believers. He had said: "I go to prepare a place for you," John 14:2; and: "Where I am, there shall also My servant be," chap. 12:26. These promises are fulfilled. Eph. 2:6; Phil. 3:20, 21. He is even now waiting for the day when also we shall ascend on Elijah's chariot, Heb. 6:19, 20. "On Christ's ascension I now build The hope of mine ascension," etc., Hymn 216.

Indeed, a joyful event. If we often remember that our conversation is in heaven, Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:1, what an incentive to active sanctification of life, to manfully struggle against evil lusts, to be zealous unto good works. Looking upward to the reopened Paradise, the believer patiently endures also the burdens which this war brings.

## 2

On the surface it appears otherwise, for Christ withdrew His visible presence from the disciples. However, He did not ascend as Enoch and Elias did, who merely entered heaven; He "ascended up far above all heavens," Eph. 4:10. The heavens did not receive Him, but He received the heavens, Acts 3:21. (Authorized Version faulty. See *Triglotta*, p. 1013.) He ascended into a majestic condition. According to His human nature also He is now present with the Church everywhere, as He said shortly before His ascension: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," Matt. 28:20. Luther says Jesus left the earth because He could do much more up there. From His throne He controls the kingdoms and empires and their leaders so that they must advance the interests of the Church. Eph. 1:22. The ascended Lord sends out His light and His truth, vv. 15, 16; Eph. 4:10-12. He gave Himself to the world at His birth; He gives Himself more completely since His ascension and to the end of days.

If we always had in mind the constant presence of our mighty ascended Lord, how easily would we bear the hardships of these latter days! With extended hands He left His disciples. The last words and gestures of a departed friend cling to the memory. To be blessed of Jesus is the richest treasure a man may possess.

The disciples returned to Jerusalem filled with peace and joy. So let us rejoice in the triumphant ascension of our Lord.

L. J. ROEHM

### Exaudi

John 15:26 to 16:4

Back of the prescription counter in the apothecary's shop are many vials of medicine for various human ailments, and men and women come for the remedies that promise to restore their health.

The Bible is a spiritual apothecary's shop, where healing potions may be had for suffering hearts. I invite you to come and take with you

### Three Remedies for Aching Hearts

1. For Doubt
2. For Fear
3. For Trouble

#### 1

The first vial of healing medicine is v. 26. The Savior had spent three years teaching His disciples what they should know for their own salvation and what they should teach others. Now He must soon part from them, and He knew that doubts would assail them. They would wonder what He had meant. Peter had already wondered why Jesus washed his feet; Thomas had said, "How can we know the way?" Philipp had said, "Show us the Father." And there would be more of that later. And for all these doubts and questions the Savior promises them the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. He will testify of Jesus. He will enter their hearts, enlighten their minds, increase their knowledge, dispel their doubts, and strengthen their faith. That was the Savior's promise—a remedy for their doubts and for their distress.

We are disciples of Jesus, and we are living in knowledge and faith. But we are often disciples like Peter and Thomas and Philipp. Often doubts disturb our faith; questions shake our trust and set our minds into a turmoil. Why do I suffer? Why does God not help? Why did I have to lose my son in battle? And worst of all—can my sins be forgiven? Have I not sinned too much?

For all these doubts there is a remedy in the spiritual apothecary's shop. Through God's Word the Comforter will come to you, teach you, enlighten you, banish your doubts, and comfort your soul. Medicine for the body may fail to help; this remedy is unfailing. You will learn to trust in God, and you will have the assurance of God's grace and eternal salvation. Take the remedy and use it. Do not be discouraged if all your doubts and anxieties do not vanish at once. Use the remedy often, and it will help.

#### 2

There is another ailment of the heart—the fear to confess our faith. Every Christian recognizes what a great gift he has received from his Savior, forgiveness of his sins, comfort in trouble, and the certainty of salvation. He feels that he should tell others about it. He knows Matt. 10:32. And still many Christians fear to confess Christ before men. They feel too weak and inadequate for that task. For this fear there is a remedy, v. 27. That is a command to testify, but it is more. The disciples should testify because they were with Him from the beginning. Most of us have been

with Jesus a long time, since the days of our childhood. Others have come to Jesus later. But all have been with Him. We need not fear. We are not alone. When we have an opportunity to confess His name, He will be with us. He will make us strong. John 14:26.

## 3

And then there are many troubles that make the Christian's heart ache. One is mentioned in v. 2. The Apostles and the early Christians were persecuted, imprisoned, and killed. People thought they were doing good by ridding the world of Christians (Saul). These suffering Christians must have been tortured by the thoughts "Why must we be persecuted? Is God angry at us?" But for all this trouble there is a remedy. Jesus had told them before; they must expect suffering; it was necessary for them. And so, when any kind of trouble and trial comes to us and our heart cries out, "Why, O Lord?" then reach for this remedy, and know that God has told you that suffering must come, Acts 14:22; Heb. 12:6. It is necessary for you.

These are the potent remedies that will help us in doubt, fear, and trouble. Take them from the Word of God; they will cure the ills of your soul.

FREDERIC NIEDNER

### Pentecost Sunday

John 14:23-31

The essential gift of Pentecost is nothing transitory, not like the marvels which attended the birthday of the New Testament Church (Epistle Lesson), but is an abiding gift, the Holy Spirit Himself (c. 16 ff.). He "abides forever" with His Church, and with Him we receive

#### The Gifts that Make Every Day a Pentecost

1. *The love of the Father*
2. *The Truth of the Spirit*
3. *The peace of the Son*

## 1

"My Father will love him" (v. 23) — a promise of blessedness truly heavenly. "God is love" is written on every leaf, sung by every star. "God loves me dearly, loves even me" can be sung only when the "No" of conscience and the Law has been drowned by the "Yes" of Christ's finished work (vv. 28-31) and the "Yes" of obedient faith. Rom. 1:4; v. 23 a.

God's love is more than disposition; it is action — self-communication, union with the beloved. V. 23 b. The Father not only welcomes the returning child; He Himself comes to him, makes His abode with him. And not only the Father comes but "We will

come": with the Father also the reconciling Son and the Spirit, who enables us to believe in the Son (1 Cor. 12:3) and sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts (Rom. 5:5) so that we can say: "Abba, Father," Rom. 8:15.

The indwelling of the Holy Trinity, this "exceeding great and precious promise" (2 Pet. 1:4), is an inexhaustible comfort, making every day a Pentecost through its assurance of the Father's love; it should also be a strong inducement to live Pentecostal lives. 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16.

## 2

The love of the Father, won for us by the Son, is offered to us and made our own by the Holy Spirit through the Word of Truth. V. 23 a, 24 b, 26; chap. 16:13; 17:17. Only as the Spirit "glorifies" the Son (16:14) in our hearts by revealing the truth of His person and work, can we through faith in Him be assured of the Father's love and have life through His name. 20:31. The Word of Truth, which begets this life, must also sustain this life. The devil and the Old Adam would soon ruin us if the Spirit of Truth would cease to be our Teacher and Reminder (v. 26), cease to warn us of the dangers to our spiritual life, and, when we have left the first love, cease to plead with us to do the first works. Rev. 2:4f. Let us pray every day that the Holy Spirit may sanctify us through the truth so that every day may be a Pentecost.

## 3

To those who abide in the Father's love and the Spirit's truth Christ promises: v. 27. This is a peace that Christ, as He gives the promise, is about to achieve through His "going to the Father": peace with God through the blood of His cross, peace of conscience through the assurance of pardon. Christ's peace verily is "not as the world giveth," and he who possesses it need fear nothing that the world fears or does. His peace surpasses all understanding, gives triumph over every foe, makes every day a Pentecost.

Not even the last enemy, death, can rob us of this peace; for Jesus, who "is our Peace" (Eph. 2:14), is with us. As the farewell hour strikes, we may say, as He did in His farewell: v. 28 b. If in our last battle the "prince of this world" terrifies us with his deep guile and great might, we cling to the Prince of Peace and say, as He said and because could so say: v. 30 b. Gladly we obey His final summons: "Arise, let us go hence," namely, with Him as our Comforter and Guide (Ps. 23:4) into peace (Is. 57:2). And there, where there shall be no more night (Rev. 22:5), we shall live in an endless Pentecostal day, of which the present indwelling of the Holy Trinity is a prelude and pledge (Eph. 1:14: "the Holy Spirit of promise . . . the earnest of our inheritance." Compare also 2 Cor. 6:16 with Rev. 21:3).

VICTOR BARTLING

**Pentecost Monday****John 3:16-21**

In this part of His conversation with Nicodemus our Lord impresses upon His visitor's conscience the blessedness of faith in Him and the ruinous consequences of unbelief. This is a timely topic at all times.

**Christ Contrasts Faith in Him and Unbelief**

He shows that they differ

1. *In the appraisal of His person and work*
2. *In their outcome in eternity*
3. *In the character of their works*

**1**

Faith accepts the Christ of the Gospels. He is true God, the "Only-begotten of the Father," vv. 16, 18; God's Son, v. 17; but He is also true man conversing with Nicodemus. God out of love had given Him, v. 16, and sent Him into the world, v. 17. His coming in the flesh we celebrate at Christmas time. Christ is true God and true man in one person. That is what our faith, anchored in the Word of God, believes. Matt. 16:16.

This Christ is the Redeemer, sent into the world to atone for the sins of mankind, v. 17. The world was perishing in its sins, v. 16. How He wrought this redemption Lent and Easter commemorate. Faith accepts Jesus as the only Redeemer.

But there are those who believe not on Him, v. 18. Unbelief either treats the story of Christ as a myth or, at best, is willing to grant that He was merely a human being—a great teacher perhaps, with lofty ideals and high moral standards, who has left His impress upon the world. Compare the attitude of Modernists, the social gospel, and the Reform Jews towards Christ. Unbelief likes to quote His Golden Rule. Christ's ideals are even to be given consideration at the coming peace table. But unbelief declares openly that the idea that Christ is true God is preposterous. The thought that Christ's death is more than a martyr's sacrifice appears incredible to unbelief.

But the true appraisal of Christ's person and work is a serious matter. On it depends our eternal happiness.

**2**

Faith believes that vv. 16b and 17b reveal God's true purpose when He sent His Son into the world. The world lay under God's curse because of sin, Gal. 3:10, unable to save itself from God's wrath. Death was the gateway to eternal damnation. But v. 16. He who believes in Christ as his Savior is assured of eternal life,

1 John 1:7b. In the Last Judgment He will not be condemned, v. 18a, but through death enters into eternal life, John 6:40; 11:25, 26.

Contrast with this the wretchedness of unbelief. It deceives itself by the denial of sin, 1 John 1:8, and seeks to work out its own salvation. Unbelief works at cross purposes with God's plan of salvation outlined in v. 16 and thus is the author of its own damnation, v. 18. It prefers the darkness of its vain imaginations to Christ and His revelation of the Father's will, v. 19.

What a terrible sin is unbelief! It leads to eternal damnation. Even the so-called good works of unbelief will avail nothing before God, for it is faith alone that can make our works acceptable in God's sight.

### 3

V. 21 speaks of people whose works "are wrought in God." They are people who have faith in Christ. Their works are not perfect, Phil. 3:12; Rom. 7:15. But in faith they strive towards higher ideals of Christian life, Phil. 3:14; Gal. 5:24. The Christian "doeth truth," v. 21, what is right in the sight of God. Believers live according to the instruction given Col. 3:17. Their imperfect works done in faith are acceptable to God through Christ's perfections, Matt. 25:21. Those who believe in Christ have no fear of having their works made manifest before God and man, v. 21.

How different the character of the works of unbelief. Compare Gal. 5:19-21. Many of these things are not considered wrong by the world, but God condemns them, v. 19b. No matter what the unbeliever may do, sin vitiates even the noblest of his works. Any hopes that his deeds will earn him favor with God are forlorn, Gal. 2:16 end. God's final verdict will be Luke 13:27.

Nicodemus was convinced by Christ's discourse. He became the follower of the Lord. God grant that we, too, believe in Jesus unto the end.

G. V. SCHICK

### Trinity Sunday

John 3:1-15

Trinity Sunday — do we give enough attention to this festival? The doctrine of the Trinity is fundamental. The three Ecumenical Creeds emphasize this truth. This is the banner of the Christian Church and distinguishes us from all false religions.

### The Triune God is Vitally Interested in the Sinner's Salvation

1. God the Father sacrificed His only-begotten Son
2. God the Son purchased salvation for the sinner
3. God the Holy Ghost regenerates the sinner

## 1

V. 2. Nicodemus recognized in Christ one who is "come from God." However, he had no true knowledge of Christ, nor of the Father, who had sent Him.

Today we find many warped opinions about God. The oft-repeated "Fatherhood of God" pictures the Lord as a generous old father who merely overlooks faults and transgressions of the sinner. — The rationalists and Modernists have an altogether wrong concept of God the Father.

Scripture reveals God the Father as holy and righteous. He cannot condone sin, Ps. 5:4, but must punish every transgression, Deut. 27:26; Ezek. 18:20; Rom. 6:23. Despite the repeated statements of Modernists that God has nothing to do with the present catastrophe on earth, we know that God's thunderous voice of righteous wrath speaks in unmistakable accents of sin's punishment.

Scripture also reveals God the Father as a God of love, John 3:16, who sought and wrought the world's reconciliation by sending and sacrificing His only-begotten Son.

## 2

Nicodemus, a very prominent Israelite, approached Christ in a most gentlemanly manner, v. 2. Christ's miracles had impressed him. He sought a private interview. Evidently he wanted to learn. (That he came by night may be due to fear; cf. John 19:39.) But he considered Christ merely an *exceptional teacher*. Modernists do the same when they use such terms as "divine," "come from God," but find in Christ a mere man, nothing more.

Scripture knows God the Son only as the God-Man, vv. 11-13; Rom. 9:5, etc.

Scripture emphasizes that Christ's main purpose in life was to save sinful mankind. Luke 19:10; Matt. 20:28. — Jesus knew throughout His life that He would give His life as a ransom. What He told Nicodemus, vv. 14, 15, referred to His death on the cross and to the purpose of His death. Every Israelite understood, and certainly everyone today should understand, this wonderful Gospel message to mean that God the Son became man to purchase salvation for the sinner by being "lifted up" on the cross. This is the very heart of the Savior's work.

## 3

Many do not know what to believe and to say about the Holy Ghost. Is He a person? Is He merely an influence? Is He merely God's power?

Scripture leaves no room for doubt that He is a Person, 2 Sam. 23:2; Job 33:4; Matt. 3:16; John 14:26; that He proceeds from the

Father and the Son, John 15:26; Gal. 4:6; Romans 8:9; and that He is true God, Acts 5:3, 4; Matt. 28:19.

Christ, in emphasizing the urgent necessity of regeneration, v. 3, ascribes this work to the Holy Spirit, vv. 5-8. Scripture elsewhere emphasizes that this is possible only through the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 12:3.

V. 5. The Holy Spirit accomplishes His miraculous work through the means of grace, Word and Sacrament. Cf. Titus 3:5; Acts 2:38; Rom. 10:17; James 1:18; 2 Thess. 2:14. Do the means of grace seem lowly? Let us remember that they are the means which God has chosen to perform the work of our regeneration.

Trinity Sunday — let us thank God that He has revealed Himself unto us in His holy Word as the Triune God, who is so vitally interested in our salvation.

J. W. BEHNKEN



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## Miscellanea

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### The Ghost Is Not Yet Laid

Remarks have been made recently, also in print, stating in effect that the various theories concerning the levels reached by man's simian-like ancestor in his progress toward the status of *Homo sapiens* had been discarded. Certain developments in the field of ethnology were supposed to have eliminated the suggestions which were connected with the theory of evolution as it was imposed upon history, ethnology, anthropology, and several other related fields.

But it now seems that such reports were premature. Two very recent books have, in fact, refurbished the old theories and presented them as the assured results of modern scholarship. In the first of these two books, Bailey's *Daily Life in Bible Times*, the first chapter is headed "The Unfathomable Pit of Beginnings," and the author offers material on the "Old Stone Age," 1,500,000 to 10,000 B.C., dates which by no stretch of the imagination can be fitted into Bible times. The oldest skeletons or parts of skeletons of Palestine are assumed to be at least 150,000 years old. "Miss Garrod has named these people *Paleanthropus Palestinus*. They are similar in skeletal type to the Neanderthal man of Europe, though there are variations in the direction of *Homo sapiens*." The author then proceeds to state that this earlier cave dweller was driven out by some mysterious being with human elements in the Old Stone Age, about 1,000,000 to 10,000 years ago. With the Middle Stone Age came still another variety of being, under the heading of "Mediterranean," or, more exactly for Palestine, the "Natufian" man. It was only after the New Stone Age, 7,000 to 5,000 B.C., that people on the order of *Homo sapiens* appeared in Palestine, and only in the Copper-Stone Age, 5,000 to 3,000 B.C., can we connect up evidences found by archaeologists with the historical data supplied by the Bible account. After reading these paragraphs, with their wild speculations and subjective assumptions, we wonder just why they were included in a book which is evidently intended for the average lay Bible reader. The last paragraph of Chapter I characterizes the presentation well: "So from the darkness and gropings [!] of our bottomless pit we have climbed to the light of day, bringing with us the achievements of the millenniums. How few they are, and how slowly on the dial of time they appeared; but how invaluable and fateful nevertheless." (P.11.)

The second recent book which again parades the evolutionistic theory of prehistoric events is McCown's *The Ladder of Progress in Palestine*. Chapter II of this monograph bears the caption "Seventy-five Thousand Years Before History Began." Its first sentence reads: "Palestine offers the most complete and continuous picture of prehistoric human evolution that is at present available in any part of the world." The author then refers to the *Sinanthropus pekinensis* of China, the *Pithecanthropus erectus* of Java, and particularly to the Neanderthal and Neandertaloid skeletons of Palestine. He states that "the Galilee skull dates back to at least 40,000, perhaps even to 100,000 years ago, and actually

represents an entirely new species related to the genus *Homo*." (P. 20.) Then follows a long series of speculations prefaced by the question: "Was the Galilee man a true Neanderthaler?" After discussing the Natufian culture, the author takes up further questions in Chapter III, "The Search for the Earliest Inhabitants." Of course, the "Carmel man" is brought into the discussion. Yet the statement is made: "The question, then, as to the earliest inhabitant of Palestine is still in dispute and may not be settled for many years." (P. 41.) And further on: "The pre-historian is 100,000 years nearer the Palestinian Adam than he was when the last war ended. From 6,000 B. C. to 75,000 or 100,000, not to mention 500,000 years ago, is a tremendous leap." We certainly are inclined to agree to this last statement. In fact, the leap is entirely within the imagination of such explorers.

P. E. K.

### Food for Thought from Krauth's "Conservative Reformation"

#### 1. On the Unity of the Church

To true unity of the Church, is required hearty and honest consent in the *fundamental doctrine* of the gospel, or, in other words, in the Articles of Faith. It may surprise some, that we qualify the word doctrine by the word "*fundamental*"; for that word, in the history of the Church, has been so bandied about, so miserably perverted, so monopolized for certain ends, so twisted by artifices of interpretation, as if a man could use it to mean anything he pleased, and might fairly insist that its meaning could only be settled by reference to his own mental reservation at the time he used it, that at length men have grown afraid of it, have looked upon its use as a mark of lubricity, and have almost imagined that it conveyed an idea unknown to our Church in her purer days.

It is utterly false that Evangelical Lutherans are sticklers for non-fundamentals, that they are intolerant toward those who err in regard to non-fundamentals; on the contrary, no Church, apart from the fundamentals of the gospel in which her unity and very life are involved, is so mild, so mediating, so thoroughly tolerant as our own. Over against the unity of Rome under a universal Head, the unity of High-Churchism under the rule of Bishops, the unities which turn upon like rites or usages as in themselves necessary, or which build up the mere subtleties of human speculation into articles of faith, over against these the Lutheran Church was the first to stand forth, declaring that the unity of the Church turns upon nothing that is of man. Where the one pure gospel of Christ is preached, where the one foundation of doctrine is laid, where the "one faith" is confessed, and the alone divine Sacraments administered aright, there is the one Church; this is her unity.

We protest, therefore, alike against the basis which does not propose the fundamental doctrine of the gospel as essential to unity, and the basis, which, professing to accept the gospel fundamentals as its constituent element, is, in any degree whatever, dubious, or evasive, as to what subjects of gospel-teaching are fundamental, or which, pretending to define them, *throws among non-fundamentals what the Word of God and the judgment of His Church have fixed as Articles of Faith*. On

such a point there should be no evasion. Divine Truth is the end of the Church; it is also her means. She lives for it, and she lives by it. What the Evangelical Lutheran Church regards as fundamental to gospel doctrine that is what her existence, her history, her Confessions declare or justly imply to be her articles of faith, these ought to be accepted as such by all honorable men, who bear her name. (Pp. 181—183.)

## 2. On the Need of Confession

But it is sometimes said, by very good men, as a summary answer to the whole argument for Confessions of Faith, that the very words of Scripture are a better Creed, than any we can substitute for them; better, not only, as of course they are, on the supposition that our words are incorrect, but better even if our words are correct; for our best words are man's words, but its words are the words of the Holy Ghost. But this argument, although it looks specious, is sophistical to the core. The very words of Scripture are not simply a better Rule of Faith than any that can be substituted for them, but they are the absolute and only Rule of Faith, for which nothing can be substituted. But the object of a *Creed* is not to find out what God teaches, (we go to the Bible for that) but to show what we believe. Hence the moment I set forth even the very words of the Bible as *my Creed*, the question is no longer what does the Holy Ghost mean by those words, but what do I mean by them.

The truth is that *correct human explanations* of Scripture doctrine are Scripture doctrine, for they are simply the statement of the same truth in different words. These words are not *in themselves* as clear and as good as the Scripture terms, but as those who use them can absolutely fix the sense of their own phraseology by a direct and infallible testimony, the human words may more perfectly exclude heresy than the divine words do. The term "Trinity," for example, does not, in itself, as clearly and as well express the doctrine of Scripture as the terms of the Word of God do; but it correctly and compendiously states that doctrine, and the trifler who pretends to receive the Bible, and yet rejects its doctrine of the Trinity, cannot pretend that he receives what the Church means by the word Trinity. While the Apostles lived the Word was both a rule of faith, and in a certain sense, a confession of it; when by direct inspiration a holy man utters certain words, they are to him both a rule of faith, and a confession of faith—they at once express both what he is to believe and what he does believe; but when the Canon was complete, when its authors were gone, when the living teacher was no longer at hand to correct the errorist who distorted his word, the Church entered on her normal and abiding relation to the Word and the Creed which is involved in these words: the Bible is the rule of faith, but not the confession of it; the Creed is not the rule of faith, but is the confession of it. A Lutheran is a Christian whose rule of faith is the Bible, and whose creed is the Augsburg Confession.

Our Confession is a human explanation of God's Word, but so far as it correctly explains it, it sets forth God's Word. The man who regards it as a correct explanation, or as "a summary and just exhibition" of the doctrines of which it treats, is consistently a Lutheran. No other man is. If any man can define Lutheran consistency in any better way,

we should be glad to have him do it; and if he thinks human explanations are something antagonistic to scriptural doctrine, we wish to know, if he be a clergyman or a Sunday School teacher, or a father, why he spends so many Sundays in the year in setting forth his "human explanation" to his people or his class or his children, instead of teaching them Hebrew and Greek. If he says that he believes that "human explanations" of the authorized version he reads, and of the sermons he preaches to his people, or the instruction he gives to his pupils or his children, are scriptural, because they agree with Scripture, we ask him to believe that his church in her faith, that the "human explanations" of her Confession (framed in earnest, prayerful study of the Holy Scriptures, and in the promised light of the Holy Spirit) are correct and scriptural, may have as much to justify her as he has in his confidence in his own sermons, or his own lessons. We do not claim that our Confessors were infallible. We do not say they could not fail. We only claim that they did not fail.

An age of darkness is a creedless age; corruption in doctrine works best when it is unfettered by an explicit statement of that doctrine. Between the Athanasian Creed (probably about A.D. 434) and the sixteenth century, there is no new General Creed. Error loves ambiguities. (Pp. 183—186 and 215.)

### 3. On Firmness in Confessing

Truthful separation is far better than dishonest union, and two Churches are happier, and more kindly in their mutual relations, when their differences are frankly confessed, than when they are *clouding with ambiguities and double meanings the real divergencies*. And even if two Communions are in downright conflict, it is better that the battles should be on the sides of clearly marked lines, or well understood issues — should be the struggles of nationalities, under the laws of war rather than the savage, ill-defined warfare of the border, and of the bush. . . . It is charged upon the Formula of Concord that it repressed the *Melanchthonian tendency* in our Church, and substituted the fossilization of the letter and of the dogma for the freedom of the spirit and of the Word. This again is not true. It is not true that the spirit within our Church which the Formula encountered was that of genuine freedom. It was rather the spirit which was making a real bondage under the pretenses of liberty, a spirit which was tolerant only to vagueness and laxity, not to well-defined doctrinal conviction. It was a spirit which softened and relaxed the Church when she needed her utmost vigor and firmness. It was a spirit of false deference to antiquity and human authority over against the Word. It yielded now to a false philosophizing, now to the Reformed, now to Rome. It tried to adjust some of the most vital doctrines to the demands of Rationalism on the one side, of Romanism on the other. (P. 326 f.)

### 4. The Glory of Lutheran Teaching on the Lord's Supper

All theology, without exception, has had views of the atonement which were lower or higher, as its views of the Lord's Supper were low or high. Men have talked and written as if the doctrine of our Church, on this point, were a stupid blunder, forced upon it by the self-will and

obstinacy of one man. The truth is, that this doctrine, clearly revealed in the New Testament, clearly confessed by the early Church, lies at the very heart of the Evangelical system—Christ is the center of the system, and in the Supper is the center of Christ's revelation of Himself. The glory and mystery of the incarnation combine there as they combine nowhere else. Communion with Christ is that by which we live, and the Supper is "*the Communion*." Had Luther abandoned this vital doctrine, the Evangelical Protestant Church would have abandoned him. He did not make this doctrine — next in its immeasurable importance to that of justification by faith, with which it indissolubly coheres — the doctrine made him. The doctrine of the Lord's Supper is the most vital and practical in the whole range of the profoundest Christian life — the doctrine which, beyond all others, conditions and vitalizes that life, for in it the character of faith is determined, invigorated, and purified as it is nowhere else. It is not only a fundamental doctrine, but is among the most fundamental of fundamentals.

The Lutheran Church has suffered more for her adherence to this doctrine than from all other causes, but the doctrine itself repays her for all her suffering. To her it is a very small thing that she should be judged of man's judgment; but there is one judgment she will not, she dare not hazard, the judgment of her God, which they eat and drink to themselves who will not discern the Lord's holy body in the Supper of the Lord.

We do not wish to be misunderstood in what we have said as to the *moral* repugnance to our doctrine of the Supper. We distinguish between a mere intellectual difficulty and an aversion of the affections. How New Testament-like, how Lutheran have sounded the sacramental hymns and devotional breathings of men whose theory of the Lord's Supper embodied little of its divine glory. The glow of their hearts melted the frostwork of their heads. When they treat of sacramental communion, and of the mystical union, they give evidence, that, with their deep faith in the atonement, there is connected, in spite of the rationalizing tendency which inheres in their system, a hearty acknowledgment of the supernatural and incomprehensible character of the Lord's Supper. On the other hand, the evidence is overwhelming, that, as low views of the Lord's Supper prevail, in that proportion the doctrine of the atonement exhibits a rationalizing tendency. We repeat the proposition, confirmed by the whole history of the Church, that a moral repugnance to the doctrine that the body and blood of Christ are the medium through which redemption is *applied*, has its root in a moral repugnance to the doctrine that His precious body and blood are the medium through which redemption was *wrought*. (P. 656 f.)



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## Theological Observer

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**Work Among Foreign-Born Lutherans.**—In the *Lutheran* of February 16, 1944, Dr. E. A. Tappert, Divisional Secretary, Board of American Missions (U. L. C. A.), published an important article having the title "Language and Church Progress" and the subtitle "What Is the Future of Bilingual Work in the Lutheran Church of America?" Some of the facts to which he draws attention should be placed before our readers, too. We quote, "According to the United States Census report there are still some ten million people in our land who have come from Lutheran countries—Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Estonia, to say nothing of Austria, Slovakia, Bohemia, Poland, and Russia. The metropolitan area of New York houses some 375,000 people of German extraction, 50,000 Norwegians, 60,000 Swedes, 18,000 Danes, 96,000 Finns." Undoubtedly the author is referring to people that were born abroad. In speaking of the efforts made by other denominations to win these immigrants with a Lutheran background for their faith, Dr. Tappert says, "Before the depression set in, the Presbyterian Church used to spend the enormous sum of \$1,105,000 on linguistic work alone, more than the U. L. C. A. is spending on all its mission activities; yet their field among their own people, the Hungarian Reformed and the Italian Waldensians, is very limited. The Congregationalists are working with great success among our Lutherans from Russia. They maintain a seminary for the training of German pastors for them at Yankton, South Dakota, and have succeeded in building up a synod with 94 pastors serving synodical congregations and 26 pastors serving elsewhere. These pastors are receiving Lutheran training at the seminary; they use Luther's Catechism in their churches, but they call themselves German Congregational churches, and have no connection with the Lutheran Church. They publish a sixteen-page German weekly, *Der Kirchenbote*, which is well edited. Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians all are busy working in our Lutheran field."

Speaking of his own synod, Dr. Tappert says, "The only field in which we are active among the immigrants seems to be Western Canada. There Lutherans with 237,500 members occupy fourth place, topped only by the United Church of Canada, the Roman Catholic, and the Anglican Church."

Then the author looks ahead. "But what is the prospect for the future? Looking to the north, we find that Canada is in dire need of a larger population to develop its great resources. It will undoubtedly open its doors again and receive a large number of immigrants. Among them will be a considerable number of Lutherans. While Germans from the Reich will not be welcome for a long time, there are many German Lutherans from Russia and Poland who may be looked upon by the authorities with more favor. It is probable that Russia will occupy a larger part of Finland after the war, and this would result in a larger immigration of Finnish people, who would be more welcome than the Germans. It is also probable that a large number of Norwegians and

Danes who have been uprooted by the war will seek a new home across the waters, as will many Estonians and Letts, after their country has been absorbed. All these should offer a fruitful field for linguistic work.

"Looking to the south, we find a situation which should arrest the attention of all Lutherans in our land. The great work which the Church of Germany had built up in South America, especially in Brazil, is in danger of disintegration. Large congregations, deprived of their pastors, are like sheep having no shepherd. Their schools have been closed, their public functions forbidden, all religious activities terminated. There is no hope that the German State Church will ever again be permitted to work in Brazil as before World War II nor that it can, or will, send pastors to fill their vacant pulpits.

"The SOS for pastors has come from a consecrated layman, and efforts are being made to establish a workable contact with the situation through the Lutheran World Convention. But later this must be taken up by Lutherans in our land. While for the time being the use of any foreign language in public worship is prohibited, no matter how indispensable it may be—and only the Portuguese language can be used—this decree will undoubtedly be eased after the war, when passions have calmed down and the danger of European interference is no longer imminent. Then a tremendous and delicate task will be awaiting our Church, and a great deal of wisdom and consecration will be needed to meet it."

We of the Missouri Synod think of our large District in South America, which is doing a blessed and ever-increasing work, although the difficulties that have grown out of the war are truly formidable.

The lack of aggressiveness on the part of Lutherans to do mission work among immigrants having the name "Lutheran" is ascribed by Dr. Tappert to an inferiority complex. "She" (that is, the Lutheran Church) "felt inclined to apologize for the fact that she had a racial background which was not always popular in our land, and frantically she has tried to get away from the stigma which ignorant people might attach to her, that she was a 'foreign' church, as if that would make her less precious in the sight of God." It has happened, so he says, that a Lutheran congregation in the spirit of exclusiveness refused to have anything to do with immigrant Lutherans living in a territory contiguous to its own, and as a result the Presbyterians went into that territory and built up a large church. Our author continues, "Which of our seminaries would engage a professor who is a recognized authority in a German theological faculty? Princeton and other American universities have no hesitancy in adding valuable 'foreigners' to their teaching staff and have profited by it; but would we?" We inject here that with us Missourians the chief difficulty would not be such a professor's foreign birth and training, but his all too likely rejection of vital elements of the Christian faith.

With the plea of Dr. Tapper, which we now submit, we are in full agreement, "We must rid ourselves of such inhibitions and change our attitude. Our Church is strong enough and well enough known that she need not care what the ignorant may say about her. The policies of our Church should never be influenced by political considerations,

but solely by the things that please God and benefit immortal souls." He insists that there should be a change in method, too. Formerly the work among immigrants, so he says, was done in a very haphazard way. His remarks pertain, we believe, especially to work done by the bodies that now form the U. L. C. A.

He closes with words of Luther which should be reprinted here, too: "I do not agree with those who give themselves entirely to one language and despise the others; for I would like to train young people who could be useful to Christ in strange lands, able to talk to the people, so that we may escape what happened to the Waldensians in Bohemia, who have tied up their faith with their language in such a way that they cannot explain it or talk to anybody except he learn their language. That is not the way the Holy Spirit acted in the beginning: He did not wait until all the world would come to Jerusalem and learn the Hebrew language, but gave all kinds of tongues to the office of the ministry, so that the Apostles could speak to the people wherever they went. I would rather follow this example, and it is entirely proper to expect the young to practice in many languages; who knows how God will use them some time."

A.

**Has the Bible Placed a Curse upon the Negro Race.**—*The Presbyterian Guardian* (March 10, 1944) answers this question as follows: "This question should be answered with an emphatic negative. It is surprising to discover that there are Christians who believe that the Negro race, because of its descent from Ham, is therefore under a curse. It should be noted that, upon the basis of Scripture alone, it is impossible either to prove or to disprove that the Negro is descended from Ham. Upon this point the Bible is completely silent. A list of Ham's descendants is given in Genesis 10:6-20. Upon one of Ham's sons, Canaan, a curse was pronounced in these words: 'Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren' (Gen. 9:25). It is sometimes erroneously held, as seems to be the case in the Scofield Bible, that this curse applies to all the descendants of Ham. Indeed, it is somewhat of a puzzling question why Ham is cursed in his younger son. Possibly the answer is to be found in the fact that Ham, having sinned as a son against his father (Gen. 9:22), is in turn punished in the person of his youngest son of Noah. Now, the Negro race is obviously not descended from Canaan, and hence this curse upon Canaan does not apply to it. We do well to note the words of August Dillmann, a learned commentator on the Book of Genesis: '... and, it may be said in passing, the slavery of the Negro races cannot be justified from this passage [i. e., Gen. 9:25], all the less because Negro peoples in the strict sense (ch. 10:6) are not derived from Ham at all.' There appears to be absolutely no Scriptural warrant for considering the Negro race to be servile." We agree to this, despite the fact that frequently in our publications the view that "the Bible has put a curse upon the Negro race" has been expressed and defended. But to do so, means to make a declaration without having clear and firm and unmistakable Scripture proof upon which to rest one's assertion.

J. T. M.

**The Good Work of the Student Welfare Committee Goes On.—** The work of the "Student Welfare Committee," as performed by our Church, belongs to our most important mission work at the present time. It is therefore very gratifying to learn from its monthly *News Letter*, which, on behalf of this work, Rev. R. W. Hahn is sending out to the workers and all who are interested in it, that this excellent work is successfully going on. In the bulletin of March, 1944, we read among other most interesting paragraphs the following: "In his book *Science, Religion, and the Future* C. E. Raven describes Darwinism as the dogma of a sect in science to be defended with fanatical zeal, rather than a hypothesis to be viewed strictly on its merits. Macmillan Company. Two dollars."—Indeed, an important witness against evolution!—"A consecrated co-ed at Kearney State Teachers College temporarily discontinued her studies to take over a rural parochial school at a salary of \$90 a month. With a tremendous parochial teacher shortage imminent, Pastor Potratz, who serves Nebraska State Teachers College, hopes that our student pastors universally will encourage qualified young ladies in their respective groups to follow the noble example of Miss Lorna Bergt."—"An outstanding member of Pastor Bruening's group of 30 at Southwestern Louisiana Institute, Lafayette, La., is a refugee Jewess from Germany. 'A fine member, wonderful singer, talented girl, assistant editor of the college paper.'"—"Final success note from Student Pastor A. H. Besalski of the University of Alabama, who this month relinquishes his office to Pastor Vernon Grosse, erstwhile Service Center Pastor in Kansas City: 'Confirmed another uniformed student (air crew trainee) two weeks ago.'"—"Soul-winning at Indiana University: 'I recently confirmed two students, one with the Master's degree in Biology.'—C. Stephan."—Of the students at Ohio University 80 per cent who expressed their religious views by means of a questionnaire said that they were too lazy or sleepy to go to church. One student gave up his belief in God because he studied zoology and evolution. Another dislikes the Church's references to the Bible for everything that comes up.—*Religion on the Grill, in Intercollegian.*"—"Soul-winning at the University of Wyoming: an unchurched co-ed, regularly brought to our services in Laramie by a faithful Lutheran woman student, made an appointment with Pastor Reuter in February to discuss her contemplated enrollment in his church membership class."—"The Dean of Women at Indiana University has granted all Lutheran freshmen women permission to attend the midweek Lenten services conducted by Pastor Stephan at our University Church adjacent to the campus without having a night out charged against them, if they return to their quarters by 8:45 P. M."—"The booklets published by the Synodical Student Welfare Committee have aroused much interest on our campus. Several professors have commented favorably on them."—Dr. Austin Predoehl, of the Faculty of Birmingham-Southern College (Methodist).—Late in February a Methodist faculty member purchased 100 copies of *They Go to Church.*"—"Deck Thyself, My Soul, With Gladness" is included in *University Hymns*, the hymnbook used in the fine chapel on the Colorado College Campus, Colorado Springs."—"A new problem confronting

the student pastor is the spiritual care of discharged service men who will enroll in colleges and universities at government expense." — "Student Pastor Norden introduced the weekly envelop system in his campus congregation at the University of Minnesota at the beginning of the new calendar year." — "Pastor H. P. Schmidt, pastoral adviser to our student youth at Buena Vista College, Storm Lake, Iowa, is currently teaching second-year German at that school. When religious problems arise in the class, this pastor accepts them as 'opportunities' for Scriptural testimony." — "Chuckle of the Month: 'In *Der Lutheraner*, January 25, I noticed that you have published a little booklet under the title *Sie gehen zur Kirche*. Will you kindly mail me a copy? If it can be had in the English language, I would prefer that.'" — A boost for *Der Lutheraner*, indeed! — "From the order of worship of a Congregational church (picked up at a Sunday Evening Forum in February): Prelude, Two Chorale Preludes: *Our Father Which Art in Heaven*, and *O Sacred Head, Now Wounded*, by J. S. Bach. — Anthem, *Gracious Lord of All Our Being*, by J. S. Bach. — Postlude, *Lamb of God, Our Savior*, by J. S. Bach." And are we Lutherans tiring of Bach and resorting to cheap music, while Congregationalists delight in Bach? Where is the logic? — Pastors not receiving the *News Letter* are missing much valuable sermon (especially, mission sermon) material. J.T.M.

**The Problem of Crime.** — *Time* (March 20, 1944) has this brief, but alarming report to make: "The boy of 17 is now the No. 1 criminal of the U.S. for the first time in the records of the FBI. While his older brothers are busy at war, he committed 27.7 per cent more crimes last year. FBI, analyzing its way through the 1,381,681 major crimes committed in the U.S. in 1943, had even sadder news about girl criminals. The number of under-21 girls arrested leaped 130.4 per cent over 1941. Biggest jump was in the 'V-girl' area of 'amateur' prostitution and saloon-going, which FBI politely calls 'offenses against public decency.' But there was also a 30 per cent increase in girl burglaries. Other FBI findings are: The U.S. had 1,052 fewer murders than in 1942. Robberies were down, too, but the haul per holdup was higher. Biggest increase: auto theft (up 11.4 per cent); rape (up 9.7 per cent). The war has forced house prowlers to change their hours. There are 10 per cent fewer early-evening burglaries, because gasoline-less citizens stay home more. Burglaries were up 7 per cent in daytime, when women workers were away from home. Robbers follow the market: filling-station holdups, longtime easy pickings, now declined 72 per cent." — As Christian citizens, we, too, share in the responsibility which rests upon our people to support our Government in the prevention and suppression of crime. But unless the churches return to the preaching of God's pure Word, and unless there is restored to our country the Christian home (at least to such an extent that it becomes a leaven for good), and unless all Christian citizens on their part and in their sphere obey and uphold the law of the land, we must look for even an increase in crime after the dreadful war, now raging throughout the world, will have come to an end. The problem of crime must be the concern of every decent citizen, in particular, of every Christian in our country. J.T.M.

**The Lutheran God.**—A correspondent of the *Christian Century* who had given some time to the reading of the Augsburg Confession had in indignation written a letter in which this rhetorical question occurred, "If Lutherans do not believe in an infinite monster for a God, why don't they repudiate such a terrifying doctrine?" Various replies were received. A representative of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America wrote that while his church body subscribed to the "Apostolic Creed as the confession of faith and to the Nicene Creed and Athanasian Creed, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession of 1530, and Luther's Small Catechism as doctrinal confessions," his church body in its 1929 convention had appended the following footnote, ". . . The four last-named symbols shall be considered as historical expressions of the paths our Church has trod, without, however, demanding acceptance of all their specific terms, as, for example, condemnation of those who think otherwise." Evidently the delegates who accepted that footnote misunderstood the Augsburg Confession when in various articles it says of the subscribers that they "condemn the Anabaptists" or others who teach false doctrine. The meaning, of course, is not that these false teachers are assigned to everlasting torment, but that their views are rejected as false. Very good was the reply which was sent by John Schmidt of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, South Carolina. He reminds the objector that the Augsburg Confession teaches the God "worshiped by all Christians who stand in the classical tradition of that faith." He points out to him that the Thirty-nine Articles of the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Heidelberg Catechism and the Westminster Confession contain the same teaching. Of special importance is his last sentence. "The Lutheran Church takes seriously the fact and consequence of sin. And that is why it proclaims so emphatically the blessed Gospel of forgiveness through God's grace." A.

**Interest in Doctrine for the Sake of Doctrine.**—President John Mackay of Princeton Theological Seminary is a popular speaker and welcome also in conservative Reformed circles. Hence he was the speaker at the Annual Winter Lectures of Western Seminary, Holland, Michigan. His opening address was on "John Calvin and Modern Protestantism." Largely through the influence of Emil Brunner, who lectured at Princeton for some time, he became interested in Barthianism, and in his lecture at Western Seminary he lauded Karl Barth for putting "iron into the soul of the confessional churches of Germany" and "turning the thoughts of men back to the great source of revelation and inspiration" [which, of course, is giving Barth more glory than he deserves]. The other modern exponent of the virility of Calvinism (said Mackay) is Prof. R. Niebuhr of Union Seminary of New York, who, according to Mackay, comes to us "in the German Reformed tradition on sin and grace" and is the "best contemporary interpreter of Charles Hodge" [which also is not true]. But in the report, as given in the *Calvin Forum*, of March, 1944, there is one paragraph which is interesting above others. In that paragraph President Mackay utters the warning against being "interested in doctrine for the sake of doctrine." We read in the report: "Doctrine becomes an end in itself. If you have the ideas,

nothing else matters.' At this point the speaker became eloquently bitter against those who were guilty of the heresy of putting the ideas about God in the place of God Himself. It is one thing, he contended, to have an idea of God and another thing to be in touch with the living God. Those who have only the idea of God are in danger of being self-righteous and censorious. Those who have found the living God will walk in humility before Him." This is a queer twist, which we beg our readers to observe carefully. There may indeed be such a thing as being interested in doctrine merely for its own sake without having any regard for the purpose for which God gave us His holy Word. We may thus approach Scripture from a purely speculative or academic viewpoint, much as Soeren Kierkegaard did, or also as Kant did. Again, there may be such a thing as having an idea of God without being in touch with the living God. In other words, there may be a dead orthodoxy; there may be a purely Pharisaic use of the idea or doctrine of God. But it may interest the reader to know just what Jacob T. Hoogstra, who wrote the report of Mackay's address, has to say to the speaker's warning. He writes: "This diatribe was powerful and eloquent. It stirred the audience. But—whom did President J. Mackay have in mind? No one can claim that the sin of serving an idea of God instead of the living God attaches itself necessarily to any group of people, orthodox or liberal. Even a Neo-Protestant can be guilty of that. No one can assert that self-righteousness is the vice of a certain group or tendency, and then, perhaps, in a self-righteous manner, denounce that group or tendency. John Calvin knew his God as the living God, and because he did, he never rested until he expressed this knowledge in the most precise way. John Calvin also knew, all things being equal, the truer our knowledge of God is, the closer we dwell with Him." There is much food for thought in this criticism. John Horsch in his fine book *Modern Religious Liberalism* warns his readers against Modernistic theological juggling and counterfeiting. Is it not counterfeiting on the part of Neo-Protestantism, which really is Barthianism in a liberal form, to warn against the danger of being interested in doctrine for doctrine's sake and against having an idea of God without knowing God? Is it not a subtle way of drawing the interested Bible student's attention away from the Christian doctrine so that liberal Neo-Protestantism may win its victory? Certainly, Luther did not only have a doctrine of God, but he also walked with God. And that is true of all Christian theologians deserving this name. Nor were they interested in doctrine merely for the sake of the doctrine, but they preached the doctrine and lived the doctrine, because they believed it was given them to make them and others wise unto salvation. The devil most assuredly hates the divine Word; otherwise he would not scheme out so many ways to draw people away from this precious divine gift. J.T.M.

**Confusion Regarding the Lord's Supper in Episcopalian Church Circles.**—*The Living Church* (February 6, 1944) contains an article on Holy Communion which deserves credit in so far as it goes to the trouble to present to its readers the doctrine of the Lord's Supper in some detail. But the confusion prevailing in a body which admits members of High Church, Low Church, and Broad Church tendencies and which,

in addition, must do justice to the Thirty-Nine Articles is so sadly reflected in the article that one wonders just what the ordinary Episcopalian is to believe concerning Holy Communion. A few excerpts may illustrate to our readers just how great the confusion is. Regarding the Real Presence the writer says: "The language of St. Paul and the Fourth Gospel show that the Early Church understood without qualification that the words meant that the elements of bread and wine actually become the body and blood of the Lord. That is the mind of the Catholic Church today—Roman, Orthodox, and Anglican. That was the mind of the Church of the first century" [?]. Farther down the writer states: "They [the words of institution] mean that which is the vehicle of the whole Christ, God and man—and, of course, of the ascended, reigning Christ of today. Hence, Article XXVIII declares, 'The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner,' and that 'the mean whereby the body of Christ is received, is Faith.'" Again: "It is clear that the words 'body' and 'blood' express a spiritual reality which is beyond the powers of expression of human speech. The Sacrament is the vehicle of our Savior as only His body can be; and of His life as only His blood can be. The words are sufficient to indicate His real presence." Here, then, is hopeless confusion. On the one hand, it is said that the bread and wine become truly Christ's body and blood, and that this doctrine is believed by the Roman and the Orthodox Catholic and the Anglican Church, there being a real presence, and, on the other, that the body and bread of Christ are received by faith, the body being, moreover "the whole Christ, God and man, and the ascended, reigning Christ of today." — The same confusion prevails with regard to the purpose of the Holy Sacrament. It is, in the first place, a "memorial of Christ's blessed passion and precious death." Again, it is offered for adoration, for "if the presence of Christ is granted, adoration is inevitable." In the third place, while the sacrifice of Christ cannot be repeated, in Holy Communion a memorial of it is made, and "it is re-presented before God and man." "But there is a further purpose, which can be completed only by the Church's offering: the communion of God and man, which is at once the highest of human duties and the greatest of human blessings. Emboldened to draw near by Christ's perfect offering for our sins, we dare to partake in a sacrifice of thanksgiving and union with God." But that is not all. "By virtue of the character which He conferred upon these elements, as the Prayer of Consecration goes on to say, we obtain 'remission of our sins and all other benefits of His passion'; are filled with God's 'grace and heavenly benediction,' and made one body with Christ, 'that we may dwell in Him and He in us.'" This last is sound Scriptural and Lutheran doctrine; only these benefits are imparted to the believing communicant not "by virtue of the character which He conferred upon these elements," but through the precious Gospel promise which Christ has attached to the Holy Supper and which makes Holy Communion a true means of grace, the promise being received by faith. According to the writer, the body and blood of Christ are received in Holy Communion by faith, while the benefits of re-

mission of sins, the grace of God, and the communicant's indwelling in Christ are obtained *ex opere operato*. Lutherans indeed have every reason in the world to be grateful because in the great Reformer's Small Catechism the doctrine of the Lord's Supper is so clearly, fully, and Scripturally presented. In the simplest words possible Luther here explains both the *nature* and the *purpose* of the Holy Supper, as also, of course, why the bodily eating and drinking do such great things and how the Sacrament is to be received worthily. May it be granted us never to teach anything else than what Luther here sets forth on the basis of Holy Scripture. And while we are writing this, let our readers remember that in 1544 Luther wrote his *Brief Confession Regarding the Holy Sacrament Against the Enthusiasts*. The book appeared that year by the end of September, and it is still worthy of study, especially on account of Luther's fine characterization of enthusiasm and his excellent remarks on religious unionism. (St. L. Ed., XX:1764—1791.) J. T. M.

**Brief Items.**—Officials of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints have formally commended law enforcement agencies on the recent arrests of fifty persons in connection with charges of polygamy. Mormon spokesmen emphasize that plural marriage has been a violation of their regulations for more than fifty years. Guilty members are excommunicated, they say. So reports the *Protestant Voice*. To evaluate properly the comment of Mormon officials referred to, place beside it this statement contained in *Popular Symbolics* (pp. 442 f.), "The agreement to give up the practice of polygamy, which in 1895 was put into the Constitution of Utah as a condition of statehood, by no means implied a renunciation of the doctrine of polygamy."

If anybody thinks that the Church is probably spending more money than it ought to for church buildings and on education, let him consider that last year the huge sum of \$6,000,000,000 was spent in the United States for wine, beer, and liquor. Do we realize that our country is at war?

It was a brave sixteen-page pamphlet which Miss Vera Brittain wrote, entitled "Massacre by Bombing," and which was sent out by twenty-eight prominent American citizens, chiefly clergymen. Whether this so-called obliteration bombing is absolutely a military necessity, as it claimed, we cannot say. Its horrors and the woes it inflicts on women and children are indescribable. The *Christian Century* in our view is right when it says that such methods are indefensible unless at the same time "every other means of shortening the war is being tried."

The number of children in the United States that receive no formal religious education is said to be seventeen million. In Texas our brethren are trying to assist in remedying this appalling situation by engaging all their members in behalf of child evangelism.

One of our exchanges quotes a dispatch on conditions in India. An estimate coming from Calcutta University states "that the total number of deaths from famine and disease in Bengal above normal is in the neighborhood of 3,500,000. The survey shows the death rate among men is much higher than among women, which means a loss

of wage earners and increasing demands for relief from women and children." And, according to the opinion of some observers, the end is not yet. Are we bestirring ourselves as we should?

The vacancy created by the death of Dr. M. Reu in the faculty of Wartburg Lutheran Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, has been filled by the election of the Rev. Emil Matzner of Marine City, Mich., who has accepted the call and will begin his teaching when the summer semester starts (May 29). May God use him as an instrument in the spreading of sound, Scriptural Lutheranism!

Amazing is the amount of money Seventh-Day Adventists are raising for their denominational purposes. This body numbers 210,000 members. In 1942 the tithes and offerings of the members of this sect that live in North America totaled more than \$15,000,000 (\$77.14 per capita). Their 28,800 evangelistic workers labor in 413 countries and island groups. Can we read this without a blush?

*America* (Roman Catholic weekly) states editorially that it has become known that "since Pearl Harbor 1,028,000 men have been discharged from the armed services. . . . Some of them are wounded and need hospitalization; others require vocational rehabilitation; many must be helped to continue studies interrupted by the war; and the great majority need assistance in finding work, either in their old jobs, where these are still open, or in new occupations."

Balancing all the factors, therefore, we think it likely that the atrocities on Bataan represented not the deliberate policy of the Japanese high command, but the brutal rage of subordinate officers and soldiers venting itself on helpless prisoners. Yet since this is not certain and in the nature of the case cannot be proved now, the only way to deal with the issue which this question raises is to rely on the promise of future legal punishment against the proved perpetrators of such crimes given by President Roosevelt.—From an editorial in the *Christian Century*.

The *Christian Century* editorially prints in part a letter of a Lutheran pastor pointing out to a young woman of his church who wished to join the Evangelical and Reformed Church why she could not with a good conscience do that. The letter points to the difference in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper between the two church bodies. The *Christian Century* editorially remarks, "The width of the actual gap between the Lutheran and Reformed churches we cannot judge, but so long as representatives of one think this way about the other, the gap in fellowship is pretty wide." Yes, the gap is wide.

A.

## Book Review

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All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo.

**Ruth — the Romance of Redemption.** By J. Vernon McGee, Th. D. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids. 195 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ . \$1.50.

This is one of the many books interpreting the Holy Scriptures along dispensational and typical lines, a method quite in vogue with the Fundamentalists of our day. The author is of the opinion that "a full treatment of the theme of redemption necessitates a careful consideration of the Book of Ruth" (p. 15). He laments the fact that this has been neglected by many of the reputable writers on the theme of redemption. "As a result of this method of writing, redemption has come to mean a cold business transaction, devoid of the personal element. God did not buy man in the slave market of sin as a chattel is bought and sold. . . . The book of Ruth declares that redemption is not a business transaction but a love affair. The personal element must not be withdrawn from the doctrine of redemption, or the most vital part will be sacrificed" (pp. 15, 16). The dispensational purpose of the Book of Ruth is treated in a short chapter, where it is presented as an aspect of this book which bulks large to many Bible students. "Elimelech's family pictures Israel of today absent from the land of Canaan and scattered throughout the world, while the Gentile girl is brought into the place of blessing during this interval." But "someday the Church will be united to One who is greater than Boaz. In that day the Jew will return to the Land of Promise." (P. 23.)

No less than five chapters are devoted to the typical interpretation of the book. "There are five facts concerning the person of the redeemer which must be true, or else he cannot qualify as a legitimate redeemer under God's program: 1. The redeemer must be a near kinsman. 2. The redeemer must perform in willingness his work of redemption. 3. The redeemer must possess the ability to redeem. 4. The redeemer must be free himself. 5. The redeemer must have the price of redemption.—Boaz met all of these qualifications in the case concerning Ruth. He is but a type, and Christ is the antitype. All of these find their final and complete fulfillment in Christ. In His humanity, He met the first two qualifications. In His deity, He fulfilled the next two requirements. As the God-Man, He met the final qualification. We shall examine each one of these requirements in a separate chapter." (P. 122.) We must warn against this mode of interpretation which makes one's own conception of a Scripture passage essential to the correct understanding of the doctrine of redemption. While the Bible presents to us types of our Lord and Savior, such as Melchizedek, Ps. 110; Jonah, Matt. 12:40; we should nevertheless be very careful in establishing types and basing any doctrine on such types unless God's Word states distinctly that these men are types of the coming Messiah and wherein their typical signifi-

cance consists. Basing any doctrine or the importance of any teaching on a type which is not clearly designated as such by the Lord Himself opens the door wide to human fancies and speculations and undermines the assurance of faith, which must be based on clear Scripture in order to stand the test of trials and temptations.

We note that Keil is throughout the book spelled Kiel.

THEO. LAETSCH

**Messages on Philippians.** By Walter L. Wilson, M. D. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 43 pages, 5×8. 35 cents.

This is not a commentary or an exposition in the usual form, but a series of meditations on the significant thoughts presented by the Apostle in the Epistle of Joy. The author, evidently a well-informed lay Christian, presents discussions of the following points: The Purpose of the Book; Unity in Christ; Fellowship in Christ; Rejoicing in Christ; The Humility of Christ; Christ Exalted; Expectation from Christ; Paul's Personal Testimony; Christ, Our Example. Pastors working through *Philippians* in their Bible classes will find much excellent material in the line of fine applications for such work.

P. E. KRETZMANN

**Short Stories by Jesus.** By William Dallmann. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 219 pages, 5½×7¾. \$1.25.

The man of God, a pastor in particular, constantly dips into Scripture and finds things new and old (Matt. 13:52). In *Short Stories by Jesus* Dr. Dallmann takes the reader over familiar ground and gives him a real treat. Under the guidance of the author the parables pulsate with life. Virile, picturesque words, crisp sentences, unforgettable contrasts, many choice poetic quotations and numerous illustrations drive thoughts home and make them linger in the memory. The thirty six chapters of the book are not only a stimulus to restudy these words of Jesus, but they also offer the pastor valuable material he can use in sermons. The volume ought to find a place on all the desks of our pastors. Since the print is large and well spaced, and the average length of a chapter only six pages, the book may be used for daily devotional reading.—Through an oversight, perhaps, the Bible passage Matt. 20:1-16 is not cited on page 173.

A. W. C. GUEBERT

**Crucial Questions.** By W. M. Robertson, Pastor, the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Vancouver, B. C., Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich., 116 pages, 5×7. \$1.25.

What is here offered is, with a few exceptions, sound Scriptural theology. Chapter I shows up the fundamental errors of Modernism. Chapter II shows that the cross of Calvary is the heart of the Christian doctrine; Chapter III ("Must We Jettison Jonah?"), that if the story of Jonah is a fable, Christ did not speak the truth; Chapter IV ("What Is the Gospel?"), that the death of Christ redeemed the world because it was vicarious. Chapter V unmasks the πρῶτον ψεῦδος of modern theology, the notion that the Christian experience is the source of Christian theology. Chapter V ("Where Do We Go from Here?") takes issue with a certain writer who asserted that "saints do not go to heaven when they die and that heaven is not our eternal home." Chapter VI

deals with the vagaries and heresies of Socialism. It is a great pity that our author is not content with refuting the teachings of Socialism with Scripture but must bring forward the teachings of millennialism as an antidote to Socialism. ("Its rule will be manifested Theocracy; its labor will be with fixity of tenure, ease of production and lavish abundance; its length of life will be patriarchal; sword and famine and pestilence will disappear; etc." Page 107.) The question of Chapter VIII: "Is the Great Commission Binding upon the Church Today?" is "denied by the exponents of hyper-Dispensationalism." We are not so much interested in the quarrel between the dispensationalists (with whom our author sides) and the hyper-dispensationalists, but are certainly interested in his enforcing of the Great Commission. Is it binding upon the Church today? Many of us *practically* deny it.

Here are some noteworthy statements: "Why plunge the Church into the fires of controversy over matters of minor importance?" we are asked. "Is not coalition better than conflict when the points in dispute are relatively unimportant? May we not get together on some common principle and unify our forces?" All such reasoning displays a lamentable ignorance of the facts." (P. 9.) "Fourteen years ago I was full of these critical objections to the Word of God. . . . In my innocence I expected help from the leading exponents of the Christian faith, but I discovered that the very teaching I had imbibed in my infidel days was propagated under a Christian guise by professors of Theology. The statements you read in Prof. Peake's 'Commentary'—that the Book of Jonah is purely imaginative—I can produce to you in the works of Paine and other infidel writers." (P. 44.) "It is because of the doctrine of our faith that we are what we are tonight. . . . Christian life is not started off without the presentation of great truths. It is quite true that Christianity is a life, but it is a life produced in a certain way. These modern teachers would have you believe that you can preach the Gospel without preaching doctrine, and there is a certain amount of sarcasm at the expense of those who go in for doctrinal preaching. What we need, however, is not less theology, but more of the right kind. You cannot preach the Gospel without preaching doctrine, for every phase and feature of the Gospel has been formulated into doctrine. . . . Error in doctrine produces evil in life. . . . Ethics is the logical result in conduct of what we believe. . . . Some of us still believe that Christian truth is a fixed and determinate thing of rare and beautiful quality. Christianity is a life, but how is the life produced? You must lay hold of Christianity as an objective divine revelation if you are to produce life." (P. 65 ff.)

TH. ENGELDER

**God-Centered Religion. An Essay Inspired by Some French and Swiss Protestant Writers.** By Paul Traugott Fuhrmann. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 237 pages,  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ . Price, \$1.50.

A few decades ago the theological pendulum in many Calvinistic churches swung from the extreme of theocentrism with its one-sided emphasis of the sovereignty of God to the other extreme of anthropocentrism with its society-centered social gospel. But the anthropocentric religion of Modernism, based very largely on Schleiermacher's

pantheistic mysticism, is a fair-weather religion, and its validity is being seriously questioned in ever-increasing circles. Whither shall the floundering Modernists turn? The author of our book invites them to forsake the theory of "the god within us" and to return to the God of absolute sovereignty as He is portrayed in the writings of Calvin, the "supreme representative of theocentric thought." (P. 23.) Throughout his treatise the author places Calvinism in sharp contrast to Modernism. He shows the shallowness of Modernism and offers his readers a fairly comprehensive overview of Calvinism. By training the author is well qualified to undertake this dual task. He received his early theological training at the Waldensian Theological Seminary at Rome and obtained his licentiate in theology at Neuchatel, Switzerland. He is thoroughly acquainted with the recent French studies in Calvin research; no less than 30 works published by French Calvinists since 1920 are mentioned in his bibliography. At the Methodist Drew Seminary the author earned doctorates in history and systematic theology, working under Edwin Lewis, who renounced his Liberalism and now belongs to the Barthian school of thought, as is evident in his *A Philosophy of Christian Revelation*. In the first section Dr. Fuhrmann traces Calvin's theological development according to modern French historians and shows that the sovereignty of God is the central theme in Calvin's system. In the second part of the book the important doctrines concerning revelation, Christ, man, life, faith, etc., are discussed in the light of Calvin's fundamental principle with special reference to the antitheses between Calvinism and Modernism. The author shows, for example, that Modernism attempts to find the ultimate truth through reason, conscience, emotion, nature, or history. Calvinism, however, beginning with the sovereignty of God, finds no point of contact between man and God, and God can therefore be known only by revelation, i. e., "God Himself acting in the heart of man" (p. 87), so that man by the Bible and direct illumination comes to a knowledge and a conviction of divine truth. In the section on life (sanctification) the author shows that Modernism answers the question as to the motive for good actions by pointing to society's welfare (anthropocentric); whereas Calvinism points to the glory of God (theocentric). (P. 145 ff.) This theocentric view of Calvin gives to Calvinism its distinguishing characteristic, and the author has succeeded well in presenting Calvinism as the God-centered theology of the "God-intoxicated man." According to Professor Lecerf, a rigorous recently deceased representative of Calvinism, God as the absolute sovereign is the starting point, means, and end of everything for Calvin, and this principle prompts Calvin to systematize all religious thought around this principle and to integrate all areas, whether ecclesiastical, social, economic, cultural, political, or scientific, with his God-centered concept. (P. 164 f.) This is the basic difference between Calvinism and Lutheranism. Calvin overstresses the absolute sovereignty of God, while Luther in keeping with Scripture properly stresses the *sola gratia*. While the contrasts between Modernism and Calvinism are treated explicitly, the Lutheran reader will detect the difference between the theocentric theology of Calvin and the Christocentric approach of Luther.—Our author presents the modern Calvin scholars' view as to

the difference between Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin concerning the Lord's Supper, namely, Luther's consubstantiation (?) leads to pantheism, Zwingli's theory that sacraments have only mnemonic value leads to deism, but Calvin's doctrine "distinguishes God from all else, yet does not separate them; it unites God and His creation without confusing them. . . . Yet God's sovereignty must always be preserved. The operation of God and that of the sign must be distinguished: the sign manifests, Divine Reality alone accomplishes." (Pp. 168-172.) While, on the whole, the author is true to his promise to present classical Calvinism and not Neo-Calvinism or Barthianism, we believe that the section on inspiration (p. 85) reveals Barthian influence, especially when it is stated that no statement can be adduced from Calvin's writing in favor of literal inspiration. What about the Institutes IV, 8, 6, 9 or I, 6, 3?

F. E. MAYER

**The Gospel of the Grace of God.** By J. Clyde Turner. Broadman Press, Nashville, Tenn. 165 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ . Price, \$1.00.

**Wonderful Jesus.** By Charles Ludwig. The Warner Press, Anderson, Tenn. 127 pages,  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ . Price, \$1.00.

These two collections of sermons show the praiseworthy emphasis by many present-day Fundamentalists on the central teachings of Christianity. The first is the work of an elderly Baptist minister (Greensboro, N. C.), a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, who has served his Church as pastor and in many other capacities for over thirty-seven years. Dr. Turner preached the annual sermon at the meeting of the Southern Baptist convention at Birmingham, Ala., in May, 1940, and it was suggested to him that he expand his discourse into a series. As a result we have in this book thirteen sermons on the cardinal Bible doctrine of divine grace, treated under such heads as: "The Riches of Grace," "Saving Grace," "Abounding Grace," "Transforming Grace," "Sustaining Grace," "Prevenient Grace" (preparatory grace), "Providential Grace." The sermons are deeply doctrinal and dignified, abound in timely applications to the needs of believers, and show thorough study and a scholarly grasp of theological essentials. The reviewer was favorably impressed with both the approach and the content of the addresses. The author (a Baptist) differs at times in his viewpoints from Lutheran theology. Instead of acknowledging the Gospel as a means of grace, he merely says that "the riches of God's grace are revealed and affirmed in the message of the Gospel" (p. 29), which is inadequate since divine grace is actually offered and conveyed through the Gospel. Furthermore, the statement "faith is the condition of salvation" may be rightly understood; but when the writer, while emphasizing the *sola gratia* in general, declares that faith is "the condition on which God bestows His free gift" (p. 40), he speaks in terms of Arminianism, especially as he approvingly quotes Dr. Robertson's statement in this connection: "Grace is God's part, faith is ours" (p. 41). The whole presentation, to say the least, is lacking in clarity. We may also warn our readers against the definition of faith (used occasionally also in Lutheran circles) as being "acceptance of divine grace and surrender" (p. 41). When a person believably accepts Christ, he, of

course, surrenders himself to Christ; but to make such self-surrender an essential part of conversion in the way in which this is done in Reformed circles, means to mingle sanctification into justification. Faith as acceptance of Christ's merits is always complete, but surrender in the sense of obedience to Christ (and that is the meaning in which it is commonly used) is a fruit of faith and is never complete in this life. Ultimately, if faith were essentially self-surrender, no person could be saved since in that case salvation would be conditioned on his good works. Also the Reformed "surrender" doctrine has an Arminianistic background. In spite of these and other faults, however, the reviewer has read these sermons with much pleasure and profit.

"Wonderful Jesus" is a collection of addresses by a young Baptist pastor, the son of a missionary in Africa, where he spent the greater part of his childhood. After finishing his theological studies in America, he held evangelistic and missionary services, until he was called into the ministry. In a strongly evangelistic manner his sermons extol Jesus as the only Savior of lost mankind, treating such subjects as: "The Stranger of Galilee," "Christ at the Door," "Christ at the Well," "The Weeping Christ." There is much immature theology and inadequate terminology (to say the least) in the sermons, and it is unfortunate that the author so very often by way of illustration draws persons and incidents of the present World War into them. Nevertheless, even though it is more superficial and less scholarly than the first sermon collection, also this one can be studied with some profit. The author is especially appealing when he goes back to his experiences in Africa and contrasts the light of Christianity with the darkness of paganism prevailing there.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

**A. T. Robertson. A Biography.** By Everett Gill. The Macmillan Company, New York. 250 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ . Price, \$2.50.

To all students of Professor Robertson's two grammars of New Testament Greek this inspiring and intimate biography of the great American teacher of the Greek Testament will supply hours of delightful and instructive reading. It was composed by Dr. Everett Gill, preacher, lecturer, and writer, a close friend of Dr. Robertson, who was assisted in his task by Mrs. Robertson, one of professor Robertson's daughters, and more than three score of Robertson's former students and friends. *A Brief Autobiography*, of sixty-one pages, begun by Robertson in 1887, and *Recollections of My Early Life*, begun in 1915, provided the biographer with valuable and reliable details. With these helps and helpers Dr. Gill has performed a fine piece of biographical work. Not all chapters may be of equal interest to all readers, but such as "The Theological Professor," "The Preacher," "The Teacher," "The Author," "The 'Big' Grammar," "Home Life," "The Perfect Day," and some others which picture the professor apart from his Baptist associations, will command, we are sure, universal interest. Seven valuable pictures are added, five showing Dr. Robertson in person, either alone or in group gatherings, and two, his beloved birthplace, "Cherbury," and his beautiful Louisville home. The story of Dr. Robertson's work at Louisville, to which his whole life was dedicated, is so intensely absorbing and stimulating that

the reviewer spent on it the greater part of a "free day" and most heartily recommends it to his fellow students of Robertson's valuable grammars. The biography will no doubt arouse new interest in the study of the Greek New Testament and induce students to turn to Robertson's grammars with greater loyalty. As the biography is well written, so also the mechanical equipment of the book is excellent. A few moments' reading will convince the reader that the biography was penned out of sincere love for the task and out of still greater love for the man whose life and work it so nobly pictures.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

**Manual of Sex Education.** By Clayton F. Derstine. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 120 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ . \$1.00.

The author aims to tell the average parent and teacher of children how to tell the story of life to children of various ages. Part I answers the question, Should the Story of Life Be Told? Part II tells how to teach the story to children five to eight years old; Part III, children nine to twelve; Part IV, adolescents thirteen to twenty-five. Part V tells the story for parents and teachers, while Part VI tells why the story was told. The spirit pervading the book is that of Christian chastity. While the author calls attention to the dreadful consequences of unchastity and points out various aids toward leading a chaste life, he stresses throughout the book the need of faith and love of Christ Jesus, in whom we have strength through His atoning sacrifice to strive for, and live, a clean, fresh, wholesome sex life. We recommend the book to our readers.

THEO. LAETSCH

**In Fellowship with the Savior. II.** By P. E. Kretzmann. 32 pages,  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 6$ . Price, 15 cents; 2 for 25 cents. Order from the author, 801 De Mun Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

We are sure that this fine collection of simple Christian verse will be welcomed by many readers. Dr. Kretzmann, our esteemed colleague, is known to many as a gifted writer of consoling, strengthening Christian poetry, and the thirty-two poems offered in this attractive brochure are so timely and appealing that we heartily recommend them to all who love spiritual poetry. The following titles suggest to the reader what the booklet has to offer: "On Christmas Day"; "Thoughts for the New Year"; "A Prayer for Lent"; "Easter Trust"; "A Churchworker's Prayer"; "A Prayer for Strength"; "Meditation in Times of War"; etc. May many buy the booklet and derive much joy, inspiration, and comfort from reading its sweet gems.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

#### To Our Subscribers

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June, 1943

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